

January 1936

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THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART INCLUDING CREATIVE ART

AMERICA'S LEADING ART PUBLICATION

*The American
Magazine of*

ART

*Including
"Creative Art"*

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NUMBER 1

Portrait of a Princess, Bronze, Benin

Collection Louis Carré. Courtesy M. Knoedler & Company

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Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

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AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

GERTRUDE R. BENSON, who this month reinterprets van Gogh and his art, brings more than ordinary equipment to the task. This may be indicated by the fact that she had a Carnegie Fellowship in the fine arts in 1929-30, and a Carnegie Traveling Fellowship in 1930-31. Her writing has appeared not only in the *Art Bulletin*, but also in the *New York Times*, *Parnassus*, and *Creative Art* before it was merged with the *MAGAZINE*. In these pages several book reviews by Mrs. Benson have appeared.

HOWARD C. HOLLIS is Curator of Oriental Art at the Cleveland Museum. Under his guidance the Asiatic collections of the Mu-

seum have grown steadily and selectively. His chief academic training was gained at the Fogg Museum but has since been intensively carried on in this country and in the East.

ERLE LORAN is a Minnesota artist himself—specifically a Minneapolis artist. In writing of his fellow artists he brings a certain perspective gained from travels abroad which he manages to blend with first-hand acquaintance of long standing. In *The Arts* appeared two articles by him which are still pretty generally remembered: "An Artist Goes to Italy" and "Cézanne's Country." His review of the important Cézanne exhibition held last year at the Pennsylvania Museum was published in our February, 1935, issue.



VINCENT VAN GOGH: SELF-PORTRAIT (OIL) 1888

Collection V. W. van Gogh, Amsterdam. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"There are moments when I am wrung by enthusiasm
or madness or prophecy like a Greek oracle on a tripod."

January 1936

WHICH END OF THE HORN?

THE holidays are not yet far enough past but that their remembrance of open-heartedness is still fresh. Although wilted Christmas trees and greens and wreaths may now be relegated to the ash heap something of the flavor of open-heartedness remains. And in the new year may it now be matched by a steady increase of open-mindedness? After all, heart and mind go together in the creation of art and to a measure in its enjoyment. Cannot these balancing human attributes also be brought to bear in the equally important problems confronting artists as members of society?

So many decades have seen the artist at the small end of the horn of plenty—the giving end—that we are inclined to think of them and hence to make of them a race apart. There has been some talk of establishing the artist as an integrated part of the social order; but it has too often been hit or miss and scattered. Gradually the artists have found that by acting together they have their best—perhaps their only—chance of achieving just that end. Artists have to eat and pay rent and wear clothes just like the rest of us. From the nature of things their sales are slow and it is not simply a matter of depression or recovery. Sales have always been slow but the artists, being caught up in the gambling fever, have been willing to take a chance along with everybody else. The chance used to seem better than it really was; today the artists, like the rest of us, know just how small it actually is and a good many of them are eager to establish their contact with the world on a non-gambling and a secure basis.

Although the artists work with the idea of ultimate sales in view, the uncertainty of achieving that end puts them in a position similar to the performer on the screen or the stage. His work is seen and enjoyed but seldom taken home—except in the mind's eye. Herein lies the justification for the artists' demand for the payment of a rental fee. And herein lies also the obligation which the rest of us must meet: we have talked a lot about integrating the artist with our society and now we must help the artists to work out a plan by which this admittedly desirable end may be achieved.

Obviously any approach to this end will entail readjustment by museums and the organizations who send out and rent traveling exhibitions. Some of the smaller museums will be hard put to it to pay the rental fee. It does mount up. Perhaps a revolving purchase fund for pictures for national traveling exhibitions can be established as part of our readjustment. This would have many advantages and might, in time, come to supplement the rental fee plan for all exhibiting institutions. At any rate, some such plan is now in process of formulation.

Meanwhile the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been so instrumental in stimulating nation-wide interest in the work of our own artists, is paying a rental fee *this year* for the works invited to its Biennial Exhibition of Sculpture, Water Colors, Drawings, and Prints. Mrs. Juliana Force, Director of the Museum, wrote thus to the artists: ". . . we have decided to make an experiment and pay to the artists invited . . . a rental, for the dura-

(Continued on page 59)



VINCENT VAN GOGH: MINERS (DRAWING) 1880

Collection Kröller-Müller Foundation, Wassenaar, Holland. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art.

"I have sketched a drawing representing miners, men and women going to the shaft in the morning through the snow by a path along a hedge of thorns; shadows that pass, dimly visible in the twilight. In the background the large constructions of the mine, and the heaps of clinkers, stand out vaguely against the sky." *Letter 134*

EXPLODING THE VAN GOGH MYTH

BY GERTRUDE R. BENSON

THE apocrypha, part fact, part fable, associated with the name, Vincent van Gogh, has grown to ominous proportions since his death by suicide in 1890. Ominous because much of it is a kind of unscrupulous muckraking that sensationalizes the frustration, the tragedy, and not the achievements, in a life that was obstinately dogged by misfortune. The literary cormorants who gorge themselves on such human victims found much in van Gogh's life to excite their morbid appetites. Vincent, the evangelist who really tried to practice the gospel; the eccentric who in a state of violent excitement cut off a piece of his ear; who dared to "stand by a forsaken woman" because, as he explained, "she has never seen what is good so how can she be good"; Vin-

cent, the "mad" Dutch painter, became a front page story mouthed by newspapers and periodicals the world over. The real Vincent, the social visionary, the brilliantly lucid thinker, the revolutionary artist who speaks so vividly for himself in his work and in those extraordinary documents, the letters to his younger brother, Theo,¹ has been almost entirely ignored.

In the forty-five years since his death, a flood of novels, of novelized biographies, of critical estimates, of psychiatric discussions

¹ For the quotations from the letters which appear under the photographs and in the article, I am indebted to the splendid catalogue published by the Museum of Modern Art in connection with the current exhibition of van Gogh, and the three volumes of letters of Vincent van Gogh to his brother published by Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1927 to 1929.

of Vincent's malady and its relation to his art, a bumper crop of articles in France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Russia, Japan, and in North and South America have boomed the van Gogh myth. At best the emphasis was on the "poor fighter, the poor, poor sufferer" (Theo's words in a despairing moment); at worst literary hacksters spun a Poe-like tale of horror from the melodrama in his life or shed crocodile tears over a Christ-like hero who moved stumblingly but inevitably to his crucifixion.² Sometimes these scavengings were even published without a single photograph of van Gogh's work. It was the "De Mauriarized" Bohemian that this boom-publicity had sold to the public, not the creative artist.

To Germany (the first to publish a selection of Vincent's letters in 1906 and the biographical interpretation by Meier-Graefe in 1912) the expressionistic subjectivity of van Gogh's work made an immediate and a permanent appeal. The peasant studies and still-lives of Paula Modersohn-Becker, the early portraits of Kokoschka, the work of Klein-schmidt, the early landscapes of Heckel, and other Bruecke painters indicate how pervasive van Gogh's influence was. But these artists absorbed only what they were prepared to receive—van Gogh's ardor rather than his structural genius. France came still more slowly and a little condescendingly to the work of van Gogh. With his usual prescience he had anticipated this when he said in one of his letters, "I shouldn't be surprised if the Impressionists soon found fault with my way of working because instead of trying to reproduce exactly what I have before my eyes, I use color more arbitrarily so as to express myself forcibly." However, though the "Fauves" must have found in his work a kindred abandon to mood and color, most French artists and critics continued to speak of his Flemish neuroses, his Dutch preoccupation with genre. For many years they failed to recognize in his work that mysterious ingredient which the French so fondly and so evasively call *esprit*. He was accepted as a "sport" but not as an equal.

In 1929 the Museum of Modern Art, under the pioneering direction of Alfred H. Barr, Jr., gave the New York public its first post-war opportunity to see van Gogh in relation to his contemporaries, Cézanne, Gauguin, and Seurat. Much was then made of the tempestuous drama in Vincent's work in contrast to the restraint, the quiet, the "classic" equilibrium in the work of the other three. Since then the interest in refinements of form and color for their own sake, in abstract invention and construction, in easel-egocentricities has diminished considerably. The economic débâcle brought with it the rediscovery of the subject, and, in a sense, the rediscovery of van Gogh. A man who could write in 1882—"To stroll on wharves, and in alleys, and in streets, and in the houses, waiting rooms, even saloons—that is not a pleasant pastime unless for an artist. As such one would rather be in the dirtiest place where there is something to draw than at a tea party with charming ladies. Unless one wants to draw ladies, then a tea party is all right even for an artist"—such a man is curiously in tune with our own age.

The unique opportunity furnished by the current exhibition³ at the Museum of Modern Art to study three floors of van Gogh drawings, water colors, and oils⁴ has been hailed by the radical press no less than by the most fashionable periodicals. Of the thousands who have responded to the blast of newspaper publicity and have ploughed through the milling crowds to catch a glimpse of the pictures, how many, I wonder, came to see the work of that amazingly coherent and articulate thinker and artist we know from his letters, and how many were impelled by a morbid curiosity about "the flaming painter of a flaming art," the "flaming" title of one of the many newspaper "stories" inspired by the exhibition. In the long run that may

³ The exhibition will remain in New York through January fifth and will then be shown at The Pennsylvania Museum of Art, Philadelphia, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The Cleveland Museum of Art, and the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco.

⁴ Many of the 127 pictures on exhibition have been borrowed from the largest van Gogh collections in the world, the Kröller-Müller Foundation at Wassenaar, Holland, and the collection of V. W. van Gogh, the son of Theo, and the namesake of the artist.

² Among American writers Thomas Craven and Irving Stone are the most culpable.

not matter very much if only the pictures are permitted to speak for themselves. The Museum of Modern Art has taken a laudatory step in the right direction. Significant excerpts from the letters and relevant biographical data, placed beside the pictures to which they refer, and generous quotations from the letters in the catalogue, are valuable departures, placing the subsidiary emphasis at last where it belongs—on authentic documents which must eventually rebuild the real Vincent van Gogh for us. If only tabloid-minded writers can resist the temptation to feed news-hungry ears the kind of pulp-paper melodrama they know so well how to manufacture, perhaps van Gogh will at last be permitted to tell his own story.

It cannot be stressed too often that he was brilliantly sane except for periodic seizures during the last two years of his life, which have been diagnosed as psychic epilepsy in a careful study called *La Folie de Vincent van Gogh* by Dr. Victor Doiteau and Dr. Ed-

gard Loroy published in Paris in 1928.⁵ The letters from Vincent to Theo, his principal spiritual and financial Maecenas during his ten painting years, and especially his work are irrefutable proof that Vincent felt, thought, lived and painted with unique clarity of purpose.

"I want something serious, something fresh, something with soul in it—forward—forward" has the familiar ring of all cries in the wilderness. The relentlessness of his search for the answer to "There is something inside me, what can it be?" was undoubtedly responsible for his meteoric fulfillment as an artist. After six years in the art business as the heir-apparent of a wealthy uncle, five years "wandering here and there" as a teacher, a theological student, a lay preacher, and finally

⁵ An earlier study by Dr. Walter Riese, *Vincent van Gogh in der Krankheit*, a discussion of the problematic relationship between art and disease, published in Munich in 1926, draws a similar conclusion after showing how thin a line separates neurological abnormalities from those of the mind and spirit.



VINCENT VAN GOGH: ROOTS (CRAYON TOUCHED WITH WHITE) 1882

Collection Kröller-Müller, Wassenaar, Holland. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"I have tried to put in the landscape the same sentiment as in the figure . . . the clinging convulsively and passionately to the earth, and yet being half torn up by the storm."



VINCENT VAN GOGH: THE POTATO EATERS (OIL) 1885

Collection V. W. van Gogh, Amsterdam. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"I have tried to make it clear how those people eating their potatoes under the lamplight, have dug the earth with those very hands they put in the dish." "Though the final picture will have been painted in a relatively short time, and for the greater part from memory, yet it has taken a whole winter of painting study-heads and hands." "The color . . . is like the color of a good dusty potato, unpeeled of course."

an evangelist among the miners of the Borinage in southern Belgium, he was abruptly dismissed by the evangelical officials. He had committed the shocking offense of trying to "take root" in the working class to whom he was preaching the gospel by sharing their physical hardships with them and fighting for a modest improvement in their conditions. These early experiences left a deep and fertilizing imprint on his artistic development. His years as an art salesman introduced him to art and artists; his years among the peasants to "the drama of storm in nature, the drama of sorrow in life."

At twenty-seven, physically worn, morbid, despondent, he began to draw the Dutch miners and weavers, the peasants and fisher-folk, men, women, and children, not conventionally posed as models, but as he knew them at work and at rest. In his early drawings, done between 1880 and 1883 in Holland, he is drudging away at the figure "to

get some action and structure in it." He knew that he had a lot to learn and he studied the figure drawings of Millet and Breton and the little Dutch genre masters. In his drawing of the miners on the way to the shaft (1880) how sharply he has caught the dreariness of that procession in the half light of dawn; the bent, tubercular bodies echoed by the scrawny hedge of thorns—"shadows that pass"—but not yet palpable human forms, a faint but stark reality. There is an increasing sureness and solidity in his drawing, for he was experimenting with ink, crayon, lithographic chalk, lead pencil, and different washes; he was trying different kinds of paper and printing ink, hoping some day, perhaps, to do a series of drawings to be called "heads of the people . . . types of workmen from the people for the people, to spread them in a popular edition, taking the whole as an affair of love and charity."

The books on proportion, on perspective,



VINCENT VAN GOGH: PÈRE TANGUY (OIL) 1888

Collection Wildenstein and Company.
Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"All my work is in a way founded
on Japanese Art."

on the various mediums and phases of art-history which Theo sent him helped to broaden his scope and discipline his technique. The avidity with which he studied such technical material is indicated in a letter written to Theo in 1881: "Please look out for all possible prints or books on proportion and gather as much information about them as you can." In these early drawings, as in everything else that he ever did, or would do, there was always a dual objective, to make a clear, rich, and significant human statement with as much technical facility as possible. In everything he did he was the conscious artist aware of his aims. The dual drive in his work is also apparent in his crayon drawing "Roots" (1882) which has almost a paint quality because he "brushed in it with pencil and scraped it off again" and because he wanted to express "something of the struggle for life,"

an almost human "clinging convulsively and passionately to the earth, and yet being half torn up by the storm."

In his oils there was a still more heated battle taking place. Finger exercises in oils were much more expensive. His struggles with this medium were no less conscious and deliberate, however. His early Dutch palette so often called crude, fumbling, or muddy, was undoubtedly an authentic equivalent of the landscape and human mood he was trying to paint, which he himself compared with the colors of "soft soap and the brass color of a worn-out ten-centime piece." Never having had a real taste of academic cloisters, he tried to paint what he saw, what he felt. This method has its limitations, but it at least produces fresh, honest statements.

His "Potato Eaters," the summation of a winter of wrestling with studies of heads and

hands, is unique in the history of art. There have been studies of peasant families before—sentimental, roistering, moralistic, static still-lives. The Flemish, Dutch, and Italian genre painters, the le Nain brothers, Bruegel, Teniers, Brouwer, Millet—they have all played with the theme, but no one has so completely caught the look, the smell, the taste, the feel, the very roots of peasant life as he has. “The smell of bacon, smoke, and potato-steam . . . the color of a good dusty potato unpeeled,” the sun and the wind and the struggle with the earth reflected in their faces, in their bodies, in their hands, and in the grey-green-brown earth colors, not of spring but of late autumn, come “from the very heart of peasant life.” Because he did the final oil from memory, the details he probably hit off on the spot are subordinated to the deep organic realities that dozens of studies made a part of him. The food and the light hold the family together in a collective unit; emotionally each figure lives his own internal life, apart, and yet within the group.

“To paint peasant life is a serious thing and I should reproach myself if I did not try to make pictures which raise serious thoughts in those who think seriously about life and art. . . .” He had found a new and more satisfactory outlet for the desire to teach, to convert that had driven him into the Borinage. Unlike the majority of his contemporaries, van Gogh was always aware of his communal responsibility to those for whom he preached the gospel, no less than to those for whom he painted his pictures. He had a keen sense of social currents, an astoundingly clear grasp of economic truths. Listen to him in 1884: “The policy of floating between the old and the new is not tenable . . . sooner or later it ends with one’s standing frankly to the right or to the left.” In 1886: “We are living in the last quarter of a century which will end again in an enormous revolution. We shall certainly not live to see the refreshing of the old society after those big storms.” And in 1888: “. . . seeing absolutely nothing in the future beyond the disasters that are . . .



VINCENT VAN GOGH: SUNFLOWERS (OIL) 1888

Collection Kröller-Müller Foundation. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

“I am hard at it, painting with the enthusiasm of a Marseillais eating bouillabaisse which won’t surprise you when you know that what I’m at is the painting of some great sunflowers . . . the flowers fall so soon and the thing is to do the whole at a flash.”

bound to fall like terrible lightnings on the modern world and all civilization through a revolution or a war, or the bankruptcy of worm-eaten states." In the light of what is now history, are those the words of a madman or a prophet? If digging for "news" is inevitable, here certainly is the stuff for a real front-page story.

Like Coleridge and Emerson, van Gogh dreamt of a communistic art colony, where artists could live and work, sharing their successes and their failures. Knowing only too well how chaotic and destructive the artist's life could be, and generally was, he was prepared to contribute everything he had, to share it with all who came, but he was alone in his unselfishness, and Gauguin, "the little Bonaparte Tiger of Impressionism," who came to Arles in answer to Vincent's and Theo's invitation, was more willing to share than to contribute, and after five weeks that almost ended fatally for both of them, Gauguin returned to Paris. "Though we did not succeed," Vincent wrote to his brother six

months later, "though it is a deplorable and melancholy failure, the idea is still true and reasonable." Certainly it takes an emotional balance and rare perspicacity to admit a realistic failure despite a deep, abiding loyalty to an ideal.

For someone so uncompromising, so hypersensitive, and already overcharged, the merry-go-round of Montmartre (egotisms, duplicities, social amenities which he watched with increasing irritation) was a painfully maturing experience. [During the two years (1886-1888) that he lived in Paris with Theo, he met Degas, Pissarro, Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec, Bernard, and Gauguin. Although he was impressed by both the work and personalities of Degas and Gauguin, it was the color and subject-matter of Pissarro that intrigued him most. Pissarro's theory that one "must boldly exaggerate the effects either of harmony or of discord which colors produce" continued to absorb him, but of Seurat he wrote from Arles, "He is an original colorist . . . but I myself am returning to what I



VINCENT
VAN GOGH:
NIGHT CAFÉ
(OIL) 1888

Private Collection.
Courtesy Museum
of Modern Art

"In my picture of the 'Night Café' I have tried to express the idea that the café is a place where one can ruin one's self, run mad, or commit a crime. So I have tried to express as it were the powers of darkness in a low drink shop, by soft Louis XV green and malachite, contrasting with yellow green and hard bluegreen, and all this in an atmosphere like a devil's furnace of pale sulphur. And all this under an appearance of Japanese gaiety."



(Above)
VINCENT VAN GOGH:
BEDROOM AT ARLES

Collection V. W. van Gogh
Amsterdam. Courtesy
Museum of Modern Art

"The broad lines of the furniture must express inviolable rest . . . it is painted in free flat washes like the Japanese prints . . . no stippling, no hatching, only flat colors in harmony. . . . When I saw my canvases again after my illness the one that seemed the best to me was the bedroom."



(Right)
WOMAN ROCKING A
CRADLE (OIL) 1889

Collection Kröller-Müller Founda-
tion. Courtesy Museum of Mod-
ern Art

" . . . the idea came to me to paint such a picture that sailors, who are at once children and martyrs, seeing it in the cabin of their boat should feel the old sense of cradling come over them and remember their own lullabys."

was looking for before I came to Paris." How clearly he understood himself in relation to his contemporaries and how modest he was about his achievements are revealed in the following reference to Lautrec: "I do not think it would be an insult to the Lautrec you have to put my peasant beside it . . . because that sun-steeped, sun-burnt quality, tanned with burning sun and swept with air, will show up still more beside all that rice powder and elegance."

However his color experiments in Paris did free him from the sombre Dutch palette. At first he had devoted himself to mastering the secrets of the "dot" dialect, which was then fashionable among the Impressionists. Several pictures at the exhibition, a self-portrait and a restaurant interior show with what fluent craftsmanship he had adapted himself to the new technique. But much more important than the technique itself was the new color gamut now permanently at his disposal. Just as he had learned from Millet, and was to continue to "improvise on the black and white of Delacroix, of Daumier, and of Rembrandt, just so he had quickly assimilated what pointillism could teach him and had freed himself of its stylistic limitations. What he had discovered about "the mysterious vibrations of kindred tones . . . the marriage of complementary colors, their mingling and their opposition" cropped up again and again in his oils and especially in his later ink drawings in which he used the "dot" technique with the skill of a miniaturist to record light and air vibrations, developing it into a personal calligraphy. His portrait of Père Tanguy, the old color-merchant, a familiar and friendly figure to the artists of the *petit boulevards*, was a significant transition to what was to come in oil, the new colors but in wider areas. It was a witty inspiration to place this sturdy, provincial *communard* before a backdrop of Japanese prints, to paint his hands and body and face as solidly and with as much human penetration as he brought to his "Potato Eaters" and contrast that with the grace and fragility that van Gogh loved so much in Japanese art.

Paris had worn him thin both mentally and physically. Both in Holland and Paris, he

had worked that once rugged body of his like a dray horse, but he hadn't eaten or rested like one, and the already taut nerves began to snap. With an uncanny premonition he had anticipated this in a letter to Theo in 1883, seven years before his death: "I think that my body will keep a certain number of years . . . say between six and seven years for instance. This is the period I reckon on firmly." Pissarro, Gauguin, and Lautrec urged him to try the healing sun of the South. At first the sun-drenched cornfields and orchards of Arles, the wind-swept trees and hills, the crooked cobblestone streets and cafés, the sunflowers and cypresses, as well as the people, were exciting visual adventures. "I have a terrible lucidity at moments. When nature is so glorious these days I am hardly conscious of myself and the picture comes to me as in a dream." He worked "like one possessed" in blazing sun and maddening mistral from early morning until late at night. He was fighting to get "color not locally true from the point of view of the stereoscopic realist but color to suggest any emotion of an ardent temperament." He was developing a unique capacity for projecting the mood of the setting and of the artist into every object he touched with his brush. For him a gnarled tree-trunk or a torn sky was no less a portrait of a tortured mood than his own face; for him a peasant's face was as much and no more an echo of the struggle with the earth than a sunflower, seared by the sun, and toughened by the wind; for him the sinister shadows amid the olive groves were no less associated with a mistral mood than the cobblestones on a dark street or the red and white "sleeping hooligans" in the "Café de Nuit." Every animate and inanimate object had to play a contrapuntal rôle in the color-form-mood of his canvas, and be deeply rooted in some experience with life:—the "sulphur-colored" sunshine of Arles; the "yellow of fresh butter" in his bedroom furniture; the "mackerel" color of the Mediterranean; the atmosphere "like a devil's furnace of pale sulphur"; and the "blood-red" room of the night café, the "discordant sharps of crude pink, crude orange, crude green . . . the music of the

VINCENT VAN GOGH:
ROAD WITH CYPRESSES
(OIL) 1890

Collection Kröller-Müller Founda-
tion. Courtesy Museum of Mod-
ern Art

"When I had done those sun-
flowers, I looked for the opposite
and yet the equivalent and I said
—it is the cypress." "It is as
beautiful in line and proportion
as an Egyptian obelisk."



color" in the "Woman Rocking." Is this sensibility, responsive to the subtlest overtones in nature, this emotional clairvoyance, that of a "madman"? Compare his crystal-clear statements in words and on paper and canvas with the work of the really insane in the books on the subject by Prinzhorn and you will be forced to the inevitable conclusion that van Gogh is a master draughtsman who subjected himself to a long gruelling discipline; that he is a color pioneer who fought consciously to record in color the complete environmental mood of artist and object and the reflection of the one in the other.

The process, even at fever-heat, was never an unpremeditated translation of a sense-experience. In his color and in his line there is the same union of the headstrong and the circumspect that we find in his life, but in his work the latter predominated. He

knew better than anyone else when he failed. "I myself am on the whole dissatisfied with everything I have ever done," but of the "Arlesienne" after a drawing of Gauguin, he wrote: "This is one of the least bad things I have done." He well knew what he wanted.

In his "Self-Portrait" of 1888, we see him taut, ravaged by the physical and mental struggle to find himself, dangerously near the edge.

On December 24, 1888, he had his first epileptoid attack. After being hounded mercilessly by the children and townspeople of Arles "as if I were a curious animal"⁶ he voluntarily entered an asylum at St. Remy. At Arles he had up to this moment made enormous technical strides, considerable prog-

⁶ "The new painters, poor, treated like madmen, and because of this actually becoming so," he himself had written earlier.

ress toward making his art a science as well. "The mental work of balancing the six essential colors—sheer work and calculation with one's mind utterly on the stretch, like an actor on the stage in a difficult part, with a hundred things at once to think of in a single half-hour. . . . Do understand that I am in the midst of a complicated calculation which results in quick succession in canvases quickly executed, but calculated long beforehand . . . when anyone says that such and such is done too quickly, you can reply that they have looked at it too quickly." Pictures like the "Night Café," the "Self-Portrait," "Bedroom at Arles," and the "Woman Rocking a Cradle" show how careful these calculations must have been. In the face and hands of the "Woman Rocking a Cradle," in the dramatic lighting and the bent figures at the tables of the "Café de Nuit," we still have the van Gogh of the "Potato Eaters"; but in the deep diagonal compositions of the bedroom and the café, in the superbly patterned background of "La Berceuse," there is also an expansion of his technical scope, a deliberate contrast of the soft lyric note and the symphonic crescendo.

At St. Remy, he continued to work feverishly during his long periods of complete sanity. Although he lived in the midst of shrieking lunatics, sometimes "shut up for the livelong day under lock and key with keepers in a cell"; sometimes free to move about "in a kind of third-class waiting-room in a dead-

alive village," he was able to document with stinging accuracy the long, bleak, silent hospital corridor, the fountain beneath his window, cypresses braiding their way up into a burning sky. In his St. Remy work the pitch is often a little higher, but it is never an incoherent abandon, though it must have taken superhuman control to continue to think or work in such an environment. There is molten fire in his "Road with Cypresses," but a fire that has been carefully fed.

A year at St. Remy and this confinement became unbearable. Dr. Gachet, who lived just outside of Paris at Auvers, offered to help him. In the middle of May, 1890, he left hopefully for the North. His despair soon returned. The nervous portraits and landscapes and the storm-torn "Cornfield with Black Birds" (which is said to be the last picture he did) show a rising pulse, an increasing agitation. Fearing that he might become a burden, ("The prospect grows darker, I see no happy future at all"), he shot himself on July 27, 1890, and died two days later.

Such an uncompromising adherence to his own vision in the face of enormous odds is rare enough to be considered abnormal in a world where compromise and self-preservation are expected of infants. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, why such militant loyalty to the only ideals he believed in is preferably called madness. It is a kind of inevitable sabotage which is prevalent no less in the artistic than in the political world.



VINCENT VAN GOGH: CORNFIELD WITH BLACK BIRDS (OIL) 1890

Collection V. W. van Gogh. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"There are vast stretches of corn under troubled skies, and I did not need to go out of my way to express sadness and the extreme of loneliness."



GREEN TARA. NEPAL, ABOUT TWELFTH CENTURY

Collection Heeramanek Galleries

ON THE ART OF INDIA

BY HOWARD C. HOLLIS

AN EXHIBITION of the arts of India, assembled by Mr. N. M. Heeramanek from several museums, private collections, and his own gallery, is now being circulated by the College Art Association. Comprising over a hundred paintings, sculptures, and bronzes, the collection is more comprehensive than any other in this country, except for that in the Boston Museum. Buddhism, Brahmanism (Hinduism), and Jainism are represented, the dates of the objects ranging over the first eighteen centuries of the Christian era. As the underlying purpose has been to give an impression of "pure" Indian art, nothing so composite as Graeco-Buddhist sculpture or Indo-Persian painting has been included.

There are two main approaches to an exhibition of this nature: one by the short, narrow bridge of modern criticism; the other by the long, broad walk of oriental tradition. Those who rush over the bridge will be pleased or displeased according to their personal tastes; whereas those who stroll down the walk will reap a golden harvest. For there is deep beauty here, which cannot be perceived

by the harried. One must have both the patience to familiarize himself with the background, and the sensibility to grasp the meaning.

In the whole history of Indian art there are no great names, like Rembrandt and El Greco, any more than there were in the Middle Ages of Europe. In both instances art was religious, and whenever art and religion go hand in hand, it is not the producer but the product that is important. Men were artists by profession and occupied a place not unlike that of automobile designers today, insofar as their function was the production of an article that fulfilled—within the more or less rigid limits of its class—the requirements of the people for whom it was produced. Again, their relation to society was similar to that of the modern surgeon, who operates, not to exhibit the significance of a transitory emotion, but to cause a certain effect. In either case, an overdose of novelty or originality would stifle the demand, and the practitioner would have to revert to type or seek other employment. In other words, the painter did not follow his own fancy, nor did



BUST OF A YAKSHINI. MATHURA, KUSHAN PERIOD, FIRST OR SECOND CENTURY
Collection Metropolitan Museum of Art

he try to display his unusual capacities as an individual, because it never occurred to him to turn out a picture expressing no greater truth than a particular aspect of his own personality.

Thus, the artists applied themselves over and over again to the same themes, with the result that two portrayals of one subject were often indistinguishable from each other, and even when different, contained the elements

requisite to their immediate identification. This has always been true of symbolic art, a representation of the Crucifixion, for instance, adhering necessarily to the established iconographic form, since it would not otherwise have been recognized by the worshipers.

What chance was there, then, for a man to produce anything that could be called a work of art? If he was not allowed to express a strong personality, or to rely on his



BUST OF AVALOKITESVARA. SARNATH, GUPTA PERIOD, A.D. 600

Collection Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

originality—in other words, if individual genius was, by the nature of the standards, impossible—how could he contrive to rise above the low level of “academic mediocrity”? In the answer to this question lies the chief distinction between the attitudes of the Occidental artist today and the Oriental artist of any time.

First of all, the Indian artist went through an apprenticeship that would not be tolerated

by a modern Westerner, so that when it was time for him to take up his trade, he was in no wise hampered by technical shortcomings, but could devote himself entirely to the expression of the idea.

Next, the rules of the trade had already been laid down, so that he was permitted only a minimum of inventive freedom as to composition, design, and the selection of colors. Yet, for this very reason, the qualitative aver-



BALA KRISHNA. SOUTH INDIA, ABOUT SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Collection Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

age was high, because each man had already learned as an apprentice to do what was to be required of him as a professional artist. The fact that a group of Rajput paintings may seem monotonous to us is entirely irrelevant: if they are all of approximately the same degree of excellence, and one of them is art, then all of them are art, no matter what may be our personal reactions to them as a group.

Then, too, artistic production required

enormous concentration, for the artist did not start to work until he had freed his mind of all extraneous thoughts and made himself one with the subject. That is to say, if he set out to carve the Buddha in meditation, he had first to force himself into the mental and spiritual attitude of the Buddha in meditation, for he could not otherwise have embodied in his statue the essential meaning of the theme. Since all art was religious, it fol-

lows that he was actually trying to raise his spirit to the plane of divine operations; as Elihu said to Job: "There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

And finally, the artist was concerned with neither naturalistic representation nor esoteric abstraction, his aim being the transmission of a spiritual concept in comprehensible symbolic form. The human figure, of course, was employed more than anything else, not for its own sake, but to personify deity for the benefit of those incapable of grasping it in subtler shape. Figures were not constructed with an eye to anatomical correctness, but for the purpose of translating divine concepts into intelligible language, their function being spiritual rather than biological.

That this great art is now dead by no means denies the validity of the principles on which it was founded. Throughout its history, natural, progressive changes have taken place and new elements have been brought in. Today, however, the force of the initial impulse has ebbed, and the artists lack adequate powers of concentration and application. The principles remain, but they are difficult to employ in a scientific and unreligious age. And it is likewise with our criticism. If we try to judge the objects in the exhibition apart from their original setting in time and place, without forcing ourselves to reinstate them in their natural background, we shall come away with only a superficial opinion. Ideally, we should be able to tell which of two paintings of the same subject comes closer to completing the artists' intentions, but this, of course, is not always possible. We are so far removed from the artists, both materially and psychologically, that we can never know exactly what they thought; but we can know the principles that motivated them.

The illustrations to this article have been chosen to represent different types, media, and periods. The "Bust of a Yakshini" is in the mottled, red sandstone of Mathura in Northern India (Rajputana), and dates from the Kushan period in the first or second century. It was probably part of a bracket on a pillar or gateway. Although it is one of the earliest pieces in the exhibition, the conclusion

should not be drawn that India had no previous art, for sculpture as advanced as this has never been known to "happen" without the parentage of a long tradition. As a matter of fact, there had been both pre-historic and historic periods of great artistic consequence before the appearance of sculpture of this style, but it was not feasible to include specimens in the exhibition. *Yakshas* and *Yakshinis* (male and female, respectively) were probably the nymphs of the ancient Dravidians and, as such, certainly had some kind of symbolic connotation. Here, the tree in full bloom and the proportions of the *Yakshini* leave little room for doubt that it is a symbol of fertility, similar embodiments of the hope for a good harvest being found in nearly all early or folk arts. In the case of India, especially, it is unnecessary to argue the point, for "there is scarcely a single female figure represented in early Indian art without erotic suggestion of some kind, implied, or explicitly expressed and emphasized; nowhere, indeed, has the vegetative sexual motif been presented with greater frankness or transparency."¹

Next in the historic sequence comes the Gupta period, from the fourth to the seventh century, during which the various elements were fused so perfectly that the style is referred to as classic. This faultless artistry is well represented in the cream sandstone bust of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara from Sarnath. Even the indeterminate state of a Bodhisattva, more divine than human, is clearly suggested in this little statue, which is too perfect for a portrait, and too warm for an austere deity. It is Avalokitesvara, the All-Compassionate, who returns to earth to welcome into Nirvana (Paradise) the souls of those who have given up this life. His tenderness and his charm have been made obvious by the sculptor, and his almost feminine frailty afforded the Chinese an opportunity to change him into Kuan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy.

Another representation of the same Bodhisattva is the little gilt copper figure from Nepal, on the northeast frontier. Its ninth-

¹ A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*.



MADHU - MADHAVI.
RAJPUT PAINTING,
RAJASTHANI, ABOUT
1600

Collection Cleveland Mu-
seum of Art

century date would lead one to expect it to exemplify the decadence after classicism, but Nepal's tendency toward retardation delayed the decline in this section. Whereas the Buddha, because of his supernal eminence, is never represented wearing jewels, Bodhissattvas, as in this instance, are often pleasantly adorned. The figure is seated in an oriental pose, with the left hand in *vyakhyana mudra*, the posture of instruction. In each hand he holds a lotus flower, which, springing from the mud to burst forth in all its radiance in the pure sunlight, typifies the rise of man to ultimate enlightenment.

Another example from the Mediaeval period is a page from a twelfth-century Nepalese palm-leaf manuscript of the *Prajnaparamita*, or *Treatise on Transcendent Wisdom*.

In addition to the text, the leaf is embellished with a representation of the Green Tara, who is the *sakti* or feminine manifestation of Avalokitesvara. She is seated on the usual lotus, her six arms with the customary attributes. The continuity of artistic styles in India will be immediately obvious to those acquainted with the seventh century frescoes at Ajanta. Here one still finds the same technical sureness, thorough understanding of the subject, and ability to instill into the picture of the goddess the quiet potentiality that is hers.

The sixteenth-century "Bala Krishna" in copper is an excellent example of the incessantly flowing rhythms of the so-called "bronzes" from South India. Krishna is an emanation of Vishnu, one of the three gods of the Hindu trinity, and, in this particular



AVALOKITESVARA. NEPAL, NINTH CENTURY
Collection Heeramanek Galleries

instance, is depicted as a child dancing after stealing butter. There is not space to go into the details of the Krishna myth, but it may be mentioned that he is known as the Divine Cowherd, and is famous for his pranks.

In considering the Rajput (*Rajasthani*) painting on paper of the late sixteenth century (see page 22), the term Rajput is used to designate Rajputana and a section of the Punjab, in Northwestern India. Paintings of this type were at first purely Indian, deriving technically from the early wall paintings at Ajanta, and only later falling to some extent under Mughal influence. These are not, literally miniatures, being eminently subject to enlargement, but are small in physical size only for the sake of convenience. Several conventions need explanation. The ground is black in the photograph, with a very high horizon and rain falling from cumulus clouds. Despite appearances to the contrary, the woman and the peacock are standing on the same ground-level, and the woman has not yet reached the house. The colors in the original are brilliant. There are no shadows, and no attempt has been made to suggest the solidity of any of the elements.

The painting represents a musical mode; that is, a selection of seven notes within which the musician is allowed complete freedom, but beyond the limitations of which he must not stray. This particular mode is known as a *ragini*, a subdivision of a *raga*, and denotes a phase of love. The painter was able to connote the circumstances by the use of the appropriate personifications of the *ragini* in the traditional setting. On the back of the painting in question is a poem which will clarify the meaning:

Madhu-madhavi (Honey-sweet) Ragini, of Hindola:

A woman fares forth on *abhisara*² to her lord and king Hindola:

The eye sees less than all, and eye is at variance with thought (so dark it is).³

² That is, to seek her lover.

³ A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Rajput Painting*.

Or, from another painting:

Thus the description of Madhu-madhavi:

Madhu-madhavi, a woman treasury of beauty,
dark complexioned, all her body dusky,
With her many kinds of jewels, very lovely,
pale of mien by reason of her many desires.

With blue-black garment, going seeking, torn
asunder by her longing for her darling,
Her heart attached to union with her lover.—

Heavy rain is pouring down and black night
fallen;

The flickering lightning flashes out (betraying
her) and then for shame she staggers,

And in that moment a peacock rises screaming,
and with a startled gesture the impassioned
woman lifts her arms.

To Bhairava her noble lord, she goes afoot on
abhisara.

Seeing but the bird, and not his palace, her
glances show her heart's distraction.⁴

The moment portrayed in the picture is that when the lightning flashes, and the lady, absorbed by her thoughts, is startled by the peacock and throws up her hands. She has not yet observed the house in which her lord awaits her.

It should not be supposed that such paintings are primitive; on the contrary, they are of the utmost sophistication, and have been boiled down to the bare essentials of intelligibility. Furthermore, one should overcome the first semblance of childlike stiffness and realize that highly developed arts always are stylized to the point of appearing—to outsiders—primitive. The fact is that elimination of the unessentials and restraint in portraying incidents of great emotional content, have combined to produce an art that could hardly have been surpassed, under the circumstances. The more one studies these small paintings, the more he comes to comprehend their vitality, intensity, and sophistication.⁵

⁴ A. K. Coomaraswamy, "Hindi Ragmala Texts," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 43.

⁵ Other articles on this exhibition are W. Norman Brown's "Indian Art in America," *Parnassus*, November, 1935; and A. K. Coomaraswamy's "Introduction" to N. M. Heeramanek's *Catalogue*. The Indian point of view is expounded further by A. K. Coomaraswamy in "Understanding the Art of India," *Parnassus*, April, 1934.



ADOLF DEHN: MINNESOTA LAKE (DRAWING)

Courtesy Weyhe Gallery

ARTISTS FROM MINNESOTA

By ERLE LORAN

WHEN I returned from Europe six years ago I found as much excitement in rediscovering America and American painters as I had felt when I first saw Cézanne's country and the galleries of Paris. I had been away long enough to feel a little like a stranger and I found that typical aspects of American life had as much fascination as the new and alien things I had seen in Europe. To my surprise I found that a red barn was as exciting as a Provençal *mas*, and, far more important, I knew that I was somehow connected with it, it really belonged to me. As for American painting, I had already realized that it counted—it shouldn't require many visits to the popular salons of Paris or Munich to give an American artist a sense of worthiness or at least a feeling of hope. I remembered the local exhibits at the Art Institute in Minneapolis and at the State Fair and in comparison there seemed to be prom-

ise and genuine quality out here in the West. In the galleries of New York I came across names of artists who had been students at the Minneapolis School of Art. There was Adolf Dehn, Arnold Blanch, Lucile Blanch, Wanda Gag, John B. Flannagan and Harry Gottlieb. Coming to notice were Dewey Albinson, Clement Haupers, and in the portrait field Frances Cranmer Greenman. It seems that very few people out here in the backwoods know that the eminent academician Paul Manship also hailed from the Twin Cities. That makes a fairly large group to have come from a sparsely populated and far-away state and now that the art interest in the United States has developed from a general heralding of American art to a more specific interest in regionalism, Minnesota comes in for notice.

Adolf Dehn is the most famous of the Minnesota brood and in several respects he is

typical of the whole group. Born on a farm and later associating himself with Minneapolis and the Art School he got out of town as soon as possible. All of the artists have left town at the first opportunity and too few, for the health of regionalism have come back to stay. In former years anyone who studied art in Minneapolis took for granted that there would never be a place for him here in the fine arts. Going first to Europe and then preferably to New York became the ideal of every ambitious young painter. Even as recently as ten or twelve years ago, when I was studying with Cameron Booth, there was little concern about Americanism or regionalism in art. Cameron Booth painted horses and barns almost exclusively, but neither he nor any of his admirers thought of his paintings as the regional documents they really were. It was merely a question of finding something paintable and we all thought Minneapolis was an extremely desirable place for artists to get away from. We wanted to go to New York

to live because there were the art galleries and there, so we thought, the people who bought and appreciated art. Adolf Dehn, Arnold and Lucile Blanch, Wanda Gag, John B. Flannagan and Harry Gottlieb have all carried out these ideas. Out of this group Adolf Dehn is the only one who has come back to do work which would associate him with his native state. Many of Dehn's finest plates were done in the neighborhood of his home town, Waterville. They are revealing transcriptions of the gentle, rolling farm country that the artist grew up in and they may well be classed as regional art. The pen and brush drawing on page 25 depicts a gloomy tamarack lake so typical of the northern part of the state. No doubt there is an emotional quality in his Minnesota work which is an argument for the present regional fad. I think it might safely be said also that his American work in general is superior to that done in Europe, but that is about as far as the idea can be carried convincingly. When the less



ARNOLD BLANCH: SCRANTON (OIL)

Courtesy Rehn Gallery



HARRY GOTT-
LIEB: IN THE
VILLAGE (OIL)
Courtesy Milch
Gallery

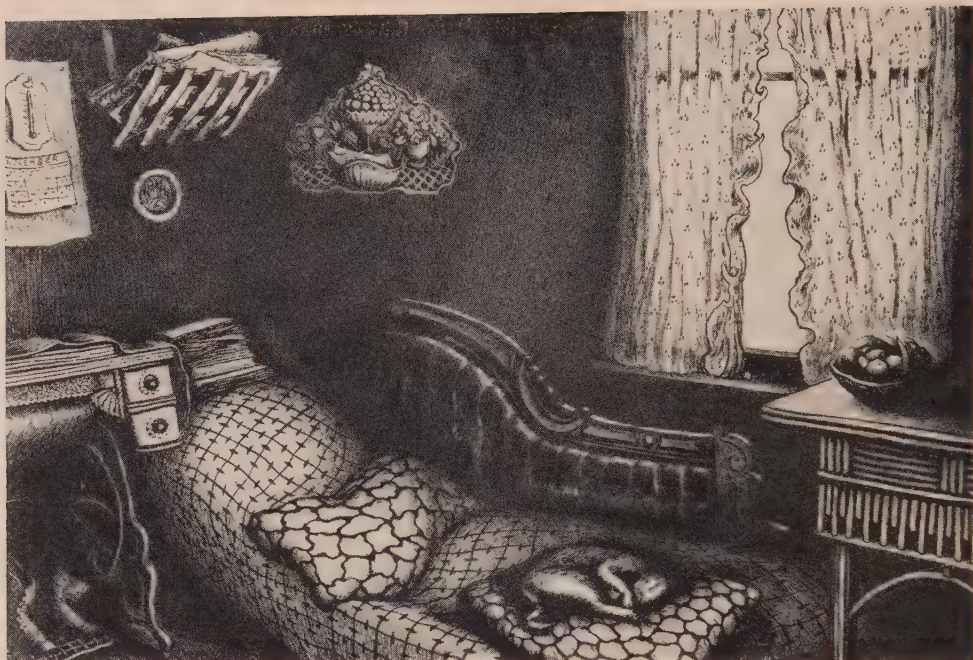
cosmopolitan communities in the country are willing to support and tolerate the work of serious artists we can feel justified in expecting them to stay nearer home to do their work. But so far Minneapolis and St. Paul have never bought enough work from an uncompromising painter to keep him alive. The clever and competent portrait painter Frances Cranmer Greenman has done well, but of course painting portraits is an entirely different matter.

Arnold Blanch has lived for some ten years in Woodstock and he has made an important name for himself in the New York art world. His landscapes show a sensitive feeling for minute natural details, they are full of tiny branches, distant hills and fields. But underlying this preoccupation with tiny forms is a control of the large volumes and a carefully planned design and arrangement notably evident in "Scranton," which is reproduced on page 26. A set of diagonals and pyramids form the skeleton upon which the masses of tiny houses and larger forms are built. The artist has never worked in his native state but he speaks of a "chronic nostalgia for Minne-

sota," and hopes to be back here some day to paint. That day might have been long ago had Minneapolis ever shown enough appreciation of this outstanding product to buy his pictures. He held his fourth one-man show at Rehn's last winter, his paintings are owned by the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney and other art galleries of the country.

Other Minnesota artists who are prominent in New York are Lucile Blanch, wife of Arnold Blanch, Harry Gottlieb, and Wanda Gag. Theirs has been the usual tedious struggle against many odds, with rewards rather meager. But Harry Gottlieb has had a few important prizes lately, one at the Corcoran Biennial and another last spring at the National Academy for his handsome snow scene. Lucile Blanch is represented at the Whitney Museum by her splendid "August Landscape." Wanda Gag, the lithographer and wood-block artist, has attained a wide reputation and her work is owned by museums in Paris, London, and Berlin. The sculptor John B. Flannagan has also won an important name for himself with his dignified abstract art.

The one outstanding commercial success



WANDA GAG: GRANDMA'S KITCHEN, MINNESOTA (LITHOGRAPH)

Courtesy Weyhe Gallery

among the transplanted Minnesota artists, with the exception of the skillful sculptor Paul Manship, is that popular doggie-etcher Levon West. He would not be mentioned except that his work has won consideration from many critics. It is drug-store quality etching full of brazen liftings from the popular master-etchers. Promoted by one of the important dealers this cheap art has been sold at good prices. You cannot forbid the public to buy what it can understand.

Turning to the artists who have remained on the scene, one who must be rather well known in New York is Dewey Albinson. He was a regional artist long before it was talked about. I remember discussing his latest one-man show at Delphic Studios a few years ago, an exhibition of work done during a two-year stay in Italy, and I said it was unfortunate his exhibition was composed of Italian pictures, now that U. S. art was so definitely the vogue in New York. He said, "Hell, I've painted every out-house from Minneapolis to Canada." Certainly no painter has painted the typical homely country aspects of America more extensively than he. He

first came to the serious attention of discerning people in a series of paintings done on the north shore of Lake Superior at the Indian reservation of Grand Portage. He painted Indians as well as the northern country-side and ever since then his subject matter has at all times been free from "artiness." He insists he doesn't care at all about expressing the character of any region—all he sees is color and form, and yet, looking over his work you will get a better description of our state than any other painter has given. He has done the iron mines, the mills, the north country, Indians, and barns galore. He has never fallen for anything precious or intellectual in modern art—his work has always been painting for painting's sake, but done right from nature. No matter how conscious he makes you at times of thick and rather gorgeous paint, you always know that his material has come from the fields and hills out of doors. The encouraging thing about Albinson and most of the other artists out our way is that they go ahead painting the American scene because it's the natural thing

for them to do and not because they are merely falling in line with current trends.

Cameron Booth knows more about the technical elements of painting than any other artist I have known. He taught for many years at the Minneapolis School of Art and no other artist has had such a far-reaching influence on the painting done in our region. In all phases of painting I find myself filling in some gap, solving some technical problem with knowledge gained during my association with Booth.

This artist's first outstanding work was done up north on Leech Lake at the Indian reservation called Onegum. The best example from this period is "Early Mass," owned by the Newark Museum. "Horse Flies," in the next phase, was purchased with the Lambert Fund for the Pennsylvania Academy.

Next followed a semi-abstract period, and, until recently, Booth has never felt that he had enough technical knowledge. He has always been in hope of finding a new, perfect approach to art that would, for him, be final and complete. But he has apparently covered the ground thoroughly and now his work is notable for its genuine concern with natural forms. This artist had a passion for painting horses and barns and "Americana" subjects in general long before we ever suspected it might become fashionable, but neither he nor any other painter in this locale has anything but scorn, as far as I know, for the type of art now being publicized by the famous Thomas Craven. The painters here are primarily interested in good painting and they simply choose the most vital subject matter within reach. Any other approach to art



JOHN B. FLANNAGAN:
NEGRO BOY

Courtesy Weyhe Gallery



LUCILE BLANCH: WILSON FARM (OIL)

Courtesy Milch Gallery

seems affected and spurious to them. Booth's work has yearly gained in sensitivity and at present he is painting in a realistic manner, daring to admit his love for barns and horses, fields and hills as they actually are. He brings to these realistic records the background of a profound search for the basic elements of color and form.

Alexander Masley has done several distinguished wood engravings but his output has been so limited that no very complete statement about his work can be made. "Man, Bird and Beast" is a work of great technical skill and it achieves expressiveness through careful arrangement and design. The same things may be said of the etching reproduced on page 31. Unfortunately, Masley has been forced to abandon engraving because of its injurious effect on the eyes. He is now working in oil and although it may take a few years I hope to see him arrive at something in this medium that will compare with his impressive prints.

Clement Haupers, painter, etcher, and lecturer, has produced some extremely original

soft ground etchings. He is intensely interested in people and in the amusing things they do. But he puts his subjects together in a way that brings them out of the purely illustrative class and makes them count as abstract arrangements. These qualities of design, together with the amusing, often biting, comments on the people he watches in various places, put his best etchings definitely among the outstanding black and whites being done in the country.

Among the younger men I believe there are some who will make a serious impression in the art world before many years. Under the PWAP Will Norman produced some lithographs of tremendous power while Stanford Fenelle acquired a facility in gouache painting that should develop into something important. Interest should also be centered on Sidney Fossum, Mac Le Sueur, Elof Wedin, and Le Roy Turner. We have our primitive in Floyd Brewer, an extremely personal painter whose work has the quaintness of John Kane's. Caleb Winholtz has distinguished himself in many important exhibitions

with his water colors. Edmond Kopietz, director of the Minneapolis School of Art, and Glen Mitchell are experienced painters but they have only recently come here and for that reason alone must, unfortunately, be omitted from the group I have chosen for specific regional merits and qualifications. Bob Brown, Alex Corazzo, Clara Mairs, Elsa Jenne, Ben Swanson, the sculptors, Sam Sabeau, Nona Soderlind and John K. Daniels figure prominently in local art. Charles S. Wells, until recently teacher of sculpture at the Minneapolis School of Art, is one of the most inspiring and revered men in our little art world.

We may well ask what the future holds for these talented Minnesota artists. At present the lure of New York is not strong, due to economic conditions. New York artists are known to be having a bad time of it themselves and younger artists and students can no longer eke out an existence doing the various odd jobs that formerly pulled them through their lean years. It is merely another

example of men at the mercy of economic forces, but in this case the results should not be unfavorable for the advancement of provincial art. Local artists will have only one choice: to depict the scene they were born in, the one they certainly should know best.

But what about local art patronage? In Minneapolis we have a large Art Institute, and an Art School which has to its credit the names of most of the artists mentioned in this note. The Art Institute for many years has graciously fostered the work of local artists by holding a yearly competitive exhibition. Sales have been practically unheard of and for the last two years the patrons and trustees have been unable to raise funds for the customary ten and twenty dollar prizes. But this year three hundred dollars in prizes are being awarded. Fortunately, certain purchasing funds help to maintain the prestige of the Art Institute itself and last year an important work by Rembrandt was acquired. In St. Paul certain patronesses have shown a venturesome



ALEXANDER MASLEY: THREE MILES FROM LANESBORO (ETCHING)

A dramatic version of the hilly country in the southern part of Minnesota along the Mississippi



DEWEY ALBIN-
SON: TOWN AND
PIT (OIL)

(Below)
CAMERON
BOOTH:
HILLS AND
FIELDS
NEAR HOPKINS
(GOUACHE)

Collection
Mrs. Francis D.
Butler, St. Paul

This gouache painting is hardly typical of Cameron Booth's work for he expresses himself more fully when using larger forms in a more plastic, less naturalistic way. But the spatial organization is quite perfect and the forms have been sensitively felt throughout. The scene is one of the high spots in the farming country near Hopkins where many of us Minneapolis artists do the greater part of our work. This is a raspberry growing country and the closely spaced posts in the patch of ground at the extreme lower right are used as supports for the bushes during the summer.





STANFORD FENELLE: MINNESOTA WINTER (WATER COLOR)

ERLE LORAN: DESERTED FARM (GOUACHE)

Included by the editor





CLARA MAIRS: MINNESOTA BARNYARD (SOFT-GROUND ETCHING)

spirit in bringing modern exhibitions and in promoting an art school whose instructors are local men, Cameron Booth among others. But it would appear that regional art needed a more imposing kind of promotion. Where

should we look for it? Is there any great possibility that a class of wealthy art patrons will soon appear on the scene or must we wait for new economic conditions to bring about a healthy fostering of art?



WILL NORMAN: VIEW OF DULUTH (LITHOGRAPH)

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

By E. M. BENSON

FRENCH PAINTING AND SCULPTURE OF THE 18TH CENTURY AT THE METROPOLITAN

TWENTIETH-CENTURY America has sufficiently recovered from its dyspeptic surfeit with the Greuzes, Bouchers, Vigée Le Bruns, and Nattiers that were served here in such large doses in the late nineteenth century so as to be able to return to the age as a whole without bearing it any aggressive ill will. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has chosen this opportune lull between storms to remind us that the eighteenth century was really stronger than its weakest links; that it may have had its maudlin, its erotic, its pompous moments, but that it also had its memorable ones. This has been convincingly demonstrated by the current show with important material drawn from many American and foreign collections.

When you consider the general character of the age, and especially of its rulers, it seems miraculous that the eighteenth century could have produced as many fine artists as it did. The answer to this is that art was no longer the exclusive plaything of a king and a few blue-blooded patrons, but was also making an appeal to the wealthy middle class, whose tastes, while not the most lofty and discriminating, were not quite as jaded as those of the reigning aristocracy. It was for an audience of this kind that Fragonard, Watteau, Lancret, and Pater painted many of their pictures. Chardin was the exception. He painted for Chardin. But curiously enough even Madame de Pompadour suspected that he had something unusual to say. And he said this in a way that was not only unique for his own time but for ours as well. His work forms the most important document that we have of the French lower-middle-classes during the first half of the eighteenth century, and points the way to Courbet, Cézanne, and everything that we cherish in the art of our contemporaries.

It is a rare treat to find seven Chardins included in a single exhibition, and the Met-

ropolitan deserves a vote of thanks for making this possible. The two small panels of children from the Baron Rothschild Collection and the more famous "Grace Before Meat" borrowed from the Louvre, also a comparatively small picture, leave one full of admiration for an artist who could work within miniature dimensions and achieve such monumental effects. Each form leads to another in an endless, a fathomless progression.

Fragonard is to Chardin what Goya is to Cézanne. He solves his formal problems not by a slow, meticulous building up, but by more intense methods which his intemperate feelings dictate to him on the spot. He may hit off a masterpiece one minute and a failure the next. We have numerous examples of both. Of the five pictures by him at the Metropolitan "The Reader" is unquestionably one of his greatest accomplishments. Disciplined but sensuous, it is an exciting example of how far the eighteenth century could go in pure painting quality despite the frequent banality of its subject-matter. In such a painting as "The Reader" the baroque of Rubens is transformed into a new element and a new art. It is a signpost upon which Renoir's name is writ large.

As for Greuze and Boucher, their painted imbecilities must have done as much to bring on the Revolution as the megalomania of King Louis. What David, the good commune-ist, had to offer was on the whole, and especially as he is represented in this show, as negatively mediocre as Greuze was positively mediocre. His classically postured "Paris and Helen," borrowed from the Louvre, is more important historically than aesthetically. His double portrait of a mother and child announces the birth of that other perpetuator of the neo-classic, Ingres.

Sculpture was something which the eighteenth century did *en masse*, but without great distinction. The exceptions are so few that you can count them on the fingers of one hand. If sculptors like Coysevox, Lemoyne, Pigalle, Falconet, Caffieri, and Pajou had lived



HOUDON: THE BATHER (MARBLE) 1782
Collection Metropolitan Museum of Art

in an age where their talents could have been put to better use than to carve portrait-heads of titled ladies and gentlemen who liked to see themselves in a mirror, perhaps they would have done what they were by nature cut out to do. As it was they left us a rogues' gallery of portrait busts more valuable as literature than art. Houdon, of course, is in a class by himself. Of the many exhibited examples of his work "The Bather," a life-size figure in marble, is Houdon at his sensuous best. The stage is now clear for Rodin to make his entrance.

BENIN—A DEAD PEOPLE AND A LIVING ART

GUNPOWDER was the "civilizing" gospel with which the British colonized and extinguished the Negro kingdom of Benin at the close of the last century; the self same gospel that Cortez used more than three centuries before to deflower Mexico, and that Mussolini is now using to make a Fascist graveyard of Ethiopia. When the British legions sailed out of the port of Benin in 1897 leaving a smoldering ruin where there was once a flourishing African nation, they carried in their ship's

hold a cargo of precious plunder—more precious than was realized at the time—several thousand pieces of sculpture in bronze and ivory, the harvest of six or seven centuries of a people's creative life.

Thirty-one of these war trophies, all excellent examples of Benin art from the collection of M. Louis Carré, are now handsomely installed at the Knoedler galleries where they are effectively placed against walls of brown velvet. At any rate, though the Benins as a people may be dead, their art is still very much alive, as we recently had occasion to notice at the monumental exhibition of African art which James Johnson Sweeney organized for the Museum of Modern Art. But whereas Mr. Sweeney only gave us a rather fragmentary picture of Benin art, the current show at Knoedler's is more truly representative of the many stylistic developments within the Benin sculptural tradition.

In his preface to the exhibition catalogue, M. Carré summarizes the researches into the history and iconography of Benin art that have been made since the end of the last century by various scholars in England, Ger-



CHARDIN: GRACE BEFORE MEAT (OIL)
Collection the Louvre, Paris. Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art



FRAGONARD:
THE READER
(OIL) c. 1770

Lent Anonymously. Courtesy
Metropolitan
Museum of Art

many, and France, and after endorsing the all-too-neat historical pigeonholes which two gentlemen by the names of Struck and Baumann have created to accommodate the various style-types of Benin art from the twelfth to the nineteenth century, Carré rounds up his thesis by raising an issue, which, if true, may very well alter our whole conception of African art. "The art of Benin," he says, "is far removed from the geometric stylization which under the name of *"art nègre"* became the fashion of Paris a few years ago. It has been supposed that the essence of African art was a geometric sculpture, more or less of indigenous nature. However, it is the art of

Benin that represents the true face of African art at its best."

Aside from the rightness or wrongness of his argument, this ardent plea for Benin art immediately loses some of its force when we remember that its advocate is a dealer whose specialty is Benin. This, however, does not preclude the possibility that M. Carré's judgments may be perfectly sound. Let us see to what extent they are. There is no more reason to assume that African art had only one "true face" than that pre-Columbian Mexico had only one "true face." Certainly the cultures of Inca and Toltec are as much the "true face" of Mexico as Maya and Aztec.



JACQUES LIPCHITZ: WOMAN RESTING ON
HER ELBOWS (1935)

Sculpture in Plaster—Exhibited Subject in Bronze
Courtesy Brummer Gallery

Certainly Belgian Congo, Cameroon, Dahomey, Ivory Coast, French Sudan are, each in its own unique way, the "true face" of Africa.

Nor is there any reason to suppose that the "geometric" art of other African regions is inferior to the "naturalism" of Benin simply because the finest examples of Benin art were naturalistic rather than geometric. I am ready to admit that such bronzes as the "Portrait of a Princess" (illustrated on the cover of the Magazine) of the *ancient* (!) period, or the numerous bronze plaques representing warriors in full panoply, and the superb bronze cocks and leopards of the *classical* (!) period, are matchless in beauty and rare in the history of any art. But I am not prepared to admit that Benin was the artistic capital of Africa.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ, SCULPTOR, AT THE
BRUMMER GALLERY

"Je plane avec ce plus lourd que l'air qui est la sculpture."—LIPCHITZ

ALFRED STIEGLITZ once made the pregnant observation that if a man is five years ahead of his time he is good advertising; if

twenty-five, a menace to civilization. This to some extent explains why men like Brancusi and Epstein have been showered with the confetti of popularity; it also explains the comparatively inhospitable reception that has been given to Jacques Lipchitz, who, in terms of actual achievement, towers above his contemporaries. I have said this before and I shall probably say it again: Lipchitz is the most original and profound sculptor that the twentieth century has produced. For this reason, if for no other, a show of his work that is as comprehensive as the present one at the Brummer Gallery* is an event which all lovers of fine art should welcome. That the majority of newspaper critics have failed to give it the intelligent support it deserves is insignificant, other than to reflect their chronic inability to recognize genuine, creative expres-

* Through January 21, 1936.



BRONZE PLAQUE, BENIN, CLASSICAL PERIOD
(1500-1691)

Collection Louis Carré. Courtesy M. Knoedler & Co.

sion unless it is accompanied by a certification of the artist's death.

The forty-two sculptures by Lipchitz at the Brummer Gallery span a period of about twenty-five years beginning with his earliest portrait heads of 1910 and 1911 (Lipchitz came to Paris from Drouskieniki, Polish-Lithuania, in 1909 at the age of eighteen), and concluding with his recent monumental sculp-

ture. From the purely formal side I suppose there are many other things he has done which are infinitely more subtle; more pleasing in an abstract, lyrical sense. His "Reclining Woman," in ebony, the bronze "Harpists" with its exquisite turquoise patina, the many high-reliefs in stone and bronze of nude figures and musical instruments, the pudgy cubist "Guitar Player" in stone that



JACQUES
LIPCHITZ:
TOWARD A
NEW WORLD
(PLASTER)
1935

Courtesy
Brummer Gallery

tures in bronze and plaster, "Song of the Vowels," two harp-like figures joined in space, a purely harmonic development of his earlier "Mother and Child" sculpture; the powerful "Struggle of Jacob with the Angel," and "Toward a New World," which, from a broadly social as well as plastic point of view, is the most important sculpture contribution that Lipchitz has made up to date. It signals a return to the human form as a symbol for something larger than itself, an epic struggle, a militant conviction that binds the hearts and minds of men. It is the concrete raised to the n th power of the universal.

Had Lipchitz never passed through the various cubist and other sculptural phases of his development I doubt whether he could have created a work of such aesthetic and human

looks like a Chinese hieroglyph come to life—these are all perfect examples of their kind. But if it is necessary to sacrifice some of these consummate formal harmonies in order to achieve a work like "Toward a New World" or even the "Woman Resting on her Elbows," the gain, I feel, is greater than the loss.

AHRON BEN-SHMUEL AND CHAIM GROSS AT
THE GUILD GALLERY

IT TAKES courage to open an art gallery in these dark days of inflation dollars and Liberty Leagues, and a special brand of courage if one's objective is "to show artists of genuine talent, whether known or unknown, totally independent of commercial considerations." This noble experiment is now being



(Above)

CHAIM GROSS: CIRCUS GIRLS (CARVING IN LIGNUM VITAE) 1934

Courtesy Guild Art Gallery, New York

(Right)

AHRON BEN-SHMOEL: PORTRAIT (BARRE GRANITE) 1930

Courtesy Guild Art Gallery, New York

launched at the Guild Art Gallery on West Fifty-seventh Street in New York with a joint show of sculptures by Ahron Ben-Shmuel and Chaim Gross, both artists of unusual ability. That the public has been sluggish about recognizing this is due, I think, to the fact that the work of these men is neither sufficiently academic to invite the interest of a Prix de Rome audience, nor faddist enough to excite the sophisticated palates of those who have been weaned on the more experimental types of European sculpture. What Ben-Shmuel and Gross are doing falls, therefore, completely outside the swift currents of the more popular sculptural traditions both good and bad. Which is the customary fate of all artists who attempt to be original without being sensational, derivative, or imitative.

Ben-Shmuel, so the story goes, learned his trade as a quarry stone-cutter at the tender age of thirteen. Some years later, when he made sculpture his profession, he turned instinctively to those glyptic materials he knew best, granite and marble, though he has since added wood, bronze, and terra-cotta to his repertoire. Into these materials he has carved



the personal history of his feelings about the human form. He is best known for his portrait heads, one of which is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Less startling but far more subtly felt is his "Portrait of a Young Man" in the current show. Of his two exhibited life-size torsos, one in black granite, recently shown at the Artists' Union, and the other in Tennessee marble, the former

dition to so much else that only the full figure can make possible.

Although Chaim Gross seldom strikes the deep human chords that we find in the work of his co-exhibitor, he supplies in abundance his own unique qualities. He prefers to do most of his carving in grained woods, which he uses with extraordinary skill. Of his many acrobatic groups he fulfils himself best I think



MAX WEBER:
REFLECTION
(OIL) 1935

Courtesy J. B.
Neumann, New
Art Circle

seems to offer a more varied and richer feast for the senses. The two torsos being almost identical in posture and dimension, this may seem like a paradoxical statement; but somehow the black granite is more suitable to this particular form than grained marble. I should like to retract what I once said about Ben-Shmuel's "Wrestlers" in Quincy granite when this sculpture was exhibited at the last Whitney Biennial. Seen in the proper light the eye has no difficulty in following the sharply defined planes of these struggling figures. Among his smaller subjects the "Reclining Figure" in bronze is the most exciting piece of work he has ever done. Sculpturally it has everything that his portrait heads have, in ad-

dition to those two superb figurines, "Circus Girls" and "Riding the Handlebars." Comparisons seem odious when one comes face to face with forms as finely poised and related as these. Call them genre pieces if you are unable to control your passion for pigeonholes, but they are no less beautiful for the names you call them.

NEW PAINTINGS BY MAX WEBER AT THE NEW ART CIRCLE

THIS is Max Weber's first public appearance for several seasons and one that should do a great deal to fortify his reputation as a painter. Weber is a symbolist, and one of the few American artists who has suf-

ficient philosophic depth and painting genius to be able successfully to cloak his symbols in strong pigment garments without being either descriptive or literary (viz. Chagall). Cézanne attempted to do this and failed—that is, as a symbolist. El Greco succeeded. This is the bond that ties Weber to El Greco as to no other single painter. But whereas El Greco could use biblical or other symbols that were universally understood by his age, as Dante's were by his, and Homer's by his, the contemporary artist living in a world devoid of universal symbols (the only one left is the dollar sign and even that has been deflated) has to create his own from the molten elements of his inner life. Naturally they are more personal, more introspective. Weber's chief symbol has always been and still is WOMAN—woman with a dual personality, contemplative and hedonic, the former holding the latter under complete control.

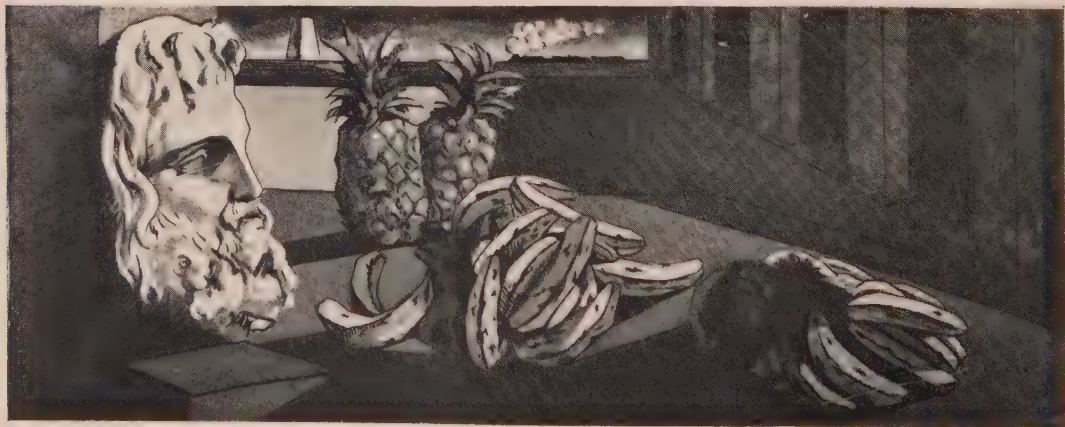
This is the pervasive human drama that goes on behind the scenes of Weber's paintings. You do not see it so much as feel it through the quality of the colors, the general construction of the pictures. It is felt as acutely in "Broken Trees," a pure landscape without figures, as it is in "Reflection." What is still more remarkable about Weber's new oils is a feeling of ecstatic liberation—that something which we get in the concluding movements of César Franck's D Minor Sym-

phony or Beethoven's Ninth. The colors have a more resonant and richer ring to them and a much wider range. Such canvases as "Mexican Pot with Flowers" and "After Bathing," add a brand new chapter to Weber's art. The introvert searching which characterized many of Weber's earlier works is entirely absent from these. They are statements made for the undiluted joy of making them. The tal-mudic groups are still every much in evidence, but even these have been brought up to a fresh pitch. Weber has proved himself to be the most unpredictable painter in America. He refuses to stand still long enough to be labelled. To the art critic, this perhaps is his most exasperating vice; to his art, a sign of undiminishing vitality.

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO—SURREALIST MINNE-SINGER

THE show of De Chirico's early pictures (1908 to 1918) at the Pierre Matisse Gallery helps to reaffirm two facts which might otherwise have escaped us: that De Chirico was a full-fledged surrealist many years before Surrealism became an international trademark; that this gentleman from Turin was one of the first to give mature expression to the feeling of spatial melancholia which has since become the collective password both of the surrealists and the neo-romantics.

(Continued on page 60)



GIORGIO DE CHIRICO: "LE REVE TRANSFORMÉ" (OIL) 1908

Courtesy Pierre Matisse Gallery

COMMENT AND CRITICISM

ON THE RENTAL ISSUE :: SOCIAL CRITICISM :: WHICH SAINT?

Not Innocents Misled

Sir:

Mr. Duncan Phillips in his letter printed in the December issue of your Magazine, we regret to say, adds very little of genuine value to the discussion of the subject with which he attempts to deal. Mr. Phillips, posing as a friend of the living artist and as genuinely interested in his welfare, builds his argument upon two false premises. First, he pictures the members of the Society as innocents misled by a small group; and then he holds up to them the spectre of the hard-boiled museum trustees with whom the artists will have to reckon if they continue under the influence of the clique which dictated the Rental Policy.

This picture of the artist as a sublime innocent may be congenial to Mr. Phillips, but he is not dealing with the actual reality as it exists today. It may please Mr. Phillips to distort the issue and state that real artists cannot be "unionized and herded," but the artists have been "unionized and herded" only in Mr. Phillips' imagination. It may be news to Mr. Phillips to be informed that it was no committee which committed the Society to what he calls "so rash a policy." The artists, as members of a guild, chose the policy of their own free will. Most of the members who voted for the resolution, because of out of town residence, were unable to be present at the meeting at which it was proposed. The resolution was sent to them and they were free to vote yes or no, as they saw fit. Of the ninety-seven members who voted, eighty-seven voted for and only seven voted against. The other three were non-committal. These facts are so widely known that it is difficult to believe that Mr. Phillips is not acquainted with them.

It is obviously a personal bias which projects Mr. Phillips into distorting these facts. And he distorts equally the nature of the opposition to the Society's policy. The artists do not assume, as does Mr. Phillips, that trustees of museums are their arch enemies.

On the contrary, the Society addressed itself to the problem of rentals on the assumption that the museums, their trustees and directors, shared with the living artist a responsibility for the development of American Art. The activities of museums in the past few years, their increasing interest in contemporary American exhibitions, gave the Society adequate reason to make that basic assumption.

The artists are not, as Mr. Phillips puts it, "holding up their best friends, the museums," they are asking that museums under the present circumstances play a more tangibly creative rôle in the development and encouragement of Art in this country. To a number of museum directors the medium that Society has chosen to accomplish this end—the Rental Resolution—seems wholly reasonable. To quote one or two: Mr. Henri Marceau, Assistant Director of the Pennsylvania Museum, wrote: "Of course there is no doubt in my mind that the artists are entitled to and should receive some form of remuneration for the pictures they so freely lend to exhibitions." Mr. Charles H. Sawyer, Curator of the Addison Gallery, wrote: "I am heartily in sympathy with this principle, and we are trying to work out such a plan ourselves on a basis which will be fair to the artist and exhibition center alike. Then general principles adopted in this resolution seem to me wholly reasonable."

The directors expressing this attitude understand the position of the artist who has sent his work out over the country year after year to exhibition after exhibition with little or no return. These exhibitions are a necessary part of our cultural life feeding a real need. Practically everyone who participates in them except the artist—from the shipping company which delivers the work, to the director who assembles the show and the critic who criticises it—is paid for his labors. Here and there the artist wins a prize; sometimes, very rarely, the artist's work is sold. The entire burden of the not inconsiderable expense of the production of work which furnishes stimulus to the beholders, and

economic recompense to many others, is borne by the artist; sometimes, as is well known, at a tragic personal sacrifice. It is not unreasonable, with the pressure of reality so close upon his heels, with the exhibition field so completely developed, that the artist should not consider himself fully recompensed by an intangible reward called publicity. Publicity has not ameliorated his need.

If the museums are, as Mr. Phillips points out, the artist's "friendly patron," the Rental Resolution can only be viewed by such friends as a forward step in the artist's "perpetual and heroic struggle for existence"—another quotation from Mr. Phillips.

If at the moment an opposite view prevails, it is due only to such prejudice as is exemplified by Mr. Phillips, exerted by a few directors, which prevents a wholesome solution of the issue raised by the Society.

KATHERINE SCHMIDT

*Chairman of the Committee on Rentals,
American Society of Painters,
Sculptors and Gravers*

Aid the Experiment

Sir:

Both sides have clearly, and I think truthfully, presented their viewpoints in the rental issue. The artist is certainly entitled to a return for the use of his painting if it can be arranged. Speaking from my knowledge of the exhibition funds of the smaller museums and colleges I should say their difficulties are only mildly expressed by Mr. Taylor and Mr. Phillips.

The most important point at issue is which course will place the work of American artists before the public in such manner as to make it function most actively and vitally in American life. The artist's first duty is to his art and he wants more than anything to see art given a chance to play its normal rôle—not its present one—in American society.

The wider the range in worthy art, the larger the number of capable producing artists and the greater the extent of territory over which their work can be made accessible, so much quicker shall we reach the goal of Americans thinking in terms of art principles

and using the artist's creative ability and its products to help solve the problems of daily life.

The artist must live and his contributions to life justify his existence. Art museums must present art rather than artists, it is true, but art museums cannot truly present art to Americans, cannot function in a living way as vital art factors in American life, without taking the exhibition of American art very seriously and, even more, working toward a very definite aim of getting art into life. This is, of course, the principal function of art in education. But the museum or art department which simply exhibits skills, is only partly functioning.

With this ideal can't a compromise be reached? Let such museums as can do so, and I understand one has already adopted the policy temporarily, try out the rental question this year, giving all artists the same treatment. Let the artists join in the experiment, presenting their claims for rent, but not withholding their work from institutions which cannot possibly pay rentals.

The question is vital enough for everyone to be willing to play the game and aid the experiment for at least a year or two.

JOHN S. ANKENY

*Fine Arts Department,
Louisiana State University.*

Stand without Props

Sir:

Art, in order to flourish and grow, must be encouraged and sustained by society. Is it not absurd to believe that this can be accomplished by the means of rental fees paid by museums—the maximum of which would not exceed ten dollars a month? Why beg the question with heated arguments as to whether or not museums can afford the fees, and whether or not they should show old or modern masters? In the arguments comparative figures have been thrown about freely in an attempt to prove that the modern artist has been neglected and that most museum funds are devoted to the old masters. Viewed from a rational standpoint these arguments are not without humor. And it seems almost

childish to suppose that patrons of art could be forced to pay rent for art that the same figures prove they are not sufficiently interested in to purchase to a great extent.

In a majority of cases museums are privately endowed. And by whom? By men and women whose genuine interest in art has shaped their desire to share their pleasure with society. These patrons and collectors are all human, sympathetic, some are egoistic, but all have convictions, good or bad, and all have an appreciation for the idea of art. They usually start by collecting works accepted by time, but they generally end by purchasing contemporary works as well as old masters. These same people as trustees, largely direct museums. It is their right to let their feeling direct them to sponsor the art of their choice. Contrast the interest shown in contemporary art by museums under their direction to the case of art under most political jurisdiction.

Museum directors are responsible to these trustees, politically and economically. There are clear examples of intelligent directors whose eagerness to develop contemporary art lost them both their positions, and temporarily, the case of modern art, for they were supplanted by those leaning strongly in the other direction. An intelligent director, and there are a goodly number in America, could not have the conception of a museum containing but one phase of art—and surely contemporary art is but one phase of art—but a greater conception of a museum, serving both the public and artists as a reference library as well as presenting current exhibitions. Admitted or not by the artist, the so-called “old masters” have been and always will be a great stimulation to the contemporary artist. The works of the old masters remain the record of the dreams and emotions of those to whom we owe our being.

The prevailing bitterness among contemporary artists against money spent for art of the past is both a reflection of the narrow lives artists are prone to live, and a clear demonstration of short-sightedness regarding their own economic and educational development. Artists failing to be extremely grateful for the opportunity to see and study fine

examples of the past are generally intolerant of their contemporaries who differ in school.

Is not the pertinent question—one that has been avoided—What do the arts mean to society, and how can they grow in order to be more significant? The moment they become significant, support will be available. When the artist makes himself indispensable to society by producing a vital art in variously needed media that will stand without props—like rental fees—the artist will solve his economic problem. Why should an artist expect anyone to pay rent for something that in most cases would never be missed? Most scientific studio experimentation and questioning commentary on society are not such penetrating forces that they become indispensable. We as artists must do a better job of it. It is for us to become better educated in the technical means of expression and certainly in an understanding and appreciation of life if we are to help direct the course it is to follow.

Things that work sell. Markets are created daily for ideas that the world needs. If art is brought forth with enough human experience touched by the spirit of one who would really give, it will not suffer to be ignored.

MILLARD SHEETS

Claremont, California.

The Keepers . . . the Makers

Sir:

. . . Concerning the present controversy between the American Society of Painters, Sculptors and Gravers and the Museum Directors, may I say that I sympathize with both sides of the question, but I also feel that the attitude of the artists is economically inevitable. In a way, this struggle is somewhat equal to the famous *Salon des Refusés*, established in nineteenth-century France, which had to do, on the surface, more with a supposed ethical and aesthetic revolution than an economic one.

I think this is one of the signs of the times which may call for a realignment of the artist and the museum, through a ministry of fine arts, which will settle problems of professional

standard and economic standard. Perhaps we shall even see a decentralization of museum collections by governmental authorization. Perhaps this would be a good thing.

For the present, the decision of the artists to force museums to rent their work for exhibitions will work a hardship for both parties concerned. However, this is a problem that can be adjusted and solved by careful planning and, perhaps, with some compromise on both sides. I believe the artist is entitled to the hire of his performance as well as the author, musician, or the athlete. If this means cutting down of exhibitions, it also means raising of professional standards and wiping out the absurd cult of the amateur, which pervades even some important exhibition groups.

The rental system will prove the importance of showing works of contemporary art. The American public spends too much money paying people to experience art for them. They spend too much money on painting which interprets the spirit of yesterday, in other words on artists who paint pictures about other pictures. Actually the museums and the public spend far too little for contemporary art that is truly alive. I may be speaking contrary to the museum system of thought, but, for the past, the keepers are important; for the present, the makers are important. A museum educates a community; an important creative artist is part of the organic growth of its culture.

I believe museums owe the living artist a larger debt than they assume and that trustees and museum officials can be made to see this point. It is a matter of readjustment; and since the whole world is readjusting, why not museums?

As to the question of organizations depending upon traveling shows, could not an adjustment be made with the individual artist on a quantity basis? If an organization takes more than one canvas by the same artist for an exhibition, could not the rental fee be adjusted to meet this? The point is not what the museums have done for the artists in the past, but what they are going to be able to do in the future, which justly interests him.

DONALD J. BEAR

Director, Denver Art Museum.

End to All Social Criticism?

Sir:

Mr. Forbes Watson, in his article on the Carnegie International, expresses doubts about the sincerity and depth of inspiration of "those artists who speak bitterly against the Carnegies and Mellons" and yet fail to refuse prizes "endowed by the profits of United States Steel!" Since "their talk and their practises are not inseparable," he implies, their ideas and their honesty must be suspect. Does Mr. Watson realize that acceptance of this theory puts an end to all social criticism? No man living in any system is immune to the products and profits of that system. If the artist turns his back on Carnegie prizes he will nevertheless be confronted with the necessity of selling pictures. Shall he insist upon investigation of the sources of income of patrons and refuse to sell to those whose income is derived from capitalist practise? Obviously, there are no such incomes. If he abandons the wish to sell pictures he must then work directly in the employ of capitalists. If he refuses this he must go on relief and be supported by taxes largely gathered from "the solid foundations of iron or aluminum profits." Or he can protest against the system by violence and be thrust in a jail similarly maintained by capitalist profit. What choice is left him? Perhaps the sincere social critic should retreat from civilization entirely; somehow acquire a piece of land miraculously untainted by capitalism; (why don't you go to Russia if you like it so much?); there keep himself alive by personally manufacturing all necessities of existence, sowing seed unfortunately bought from a profit-making institution, weaving clothing, refusing medicine and doctors when ill, making his own paints and canvases—but there is no need to belabor the point. Clearly the only way a revolutionist can demonstrate the integrity of his ideals is by shooting himself; a solution undoubtedly satisfactory to the Mussolinis and Hitlers whose attitude to art Mr. Watson so deplors.

No artist, no human being, can refrain from living on the results of private profit. No man can avoid living in a world he may despise. If this consideration abolished all

protest there would be no change, no life, no civilization; there would have been no aluminum profits to refuse, much less any art.

It is the essence of a free society that it supports self-criticism because its purposes are unified and for the general good. In seeing an anomaly in the awarding of prizes for such criticism, in finding a deviation from the rule in the artist, so to speak, biting the hand that feeds him, Mr. Watson is admitting the existence of vested interest, admitting that art is dependent upon a special class and not a thing compounded of glorious freedom and abstraction. He regards it as normal that art should support class interests. (Why, Mr. Watson! People will be saying you are subsidized by Moscow! Don't you know Mr. Hoover says this is a classless nation?)

The truth is that when the artist compromises with his beliefs so that he may win prizes or sell pictures, when his work becomes meek and indifferent, then will be the time to cry Shame; and not against the artist but against society. For then he will give not only the Carnegie Institute what it wants but also the public what business and politics train it to want: commercial and academic painting, the glorification of greed: that is, an end to art. The situation which strikes Mr. Watson as so amusing is really an element for pride. Of course some of us believe that capitalist tolerance of artistic protest exists only because art reaches a very limited public. When it appeals to a larger one, as in murals in public buildings and institutions, it is ruthlessly suppressed, irrespective of aesthetic merit. But the fact remains that only as long as prizes are awarded to artists engaged in social comment can we call our civilization free, have any hope for a vital art, or any faith left in the potentiality of our society for good. For without that encouragement of criticism we have come out into the open for class dictatorship, slavery, and fascism in which we need have no doubts about the depth of inspiration possible to the artist, even if it may not lead to such quaint situations to baffle our art-critics.

MARJORIE BRACE

Woodstock, New York.

Which Saint

Sir:

It is perhaps of little importance, but the engraving in the March, 1935, ART represents St. Rocco, (St. Roque in French; St. Roc in English).

This saint, a great missionary, who gave his life to the plague-stricken, is usually represented showing a bare leg and accompanied by a dog. I see Fido in the lower right hand of the engraving. The winding road, the exhausted expression, the bowl in the left hand while the right lifts the gown to expose the plague-stricken leg.

All this is of St. Roc.

The engraving has none of the usual John the Baptist's attributes.

Washington, D. C.

HENRY B. BINSSE

Sir:

In answer to your letter about the Campagnola "St. John" (for St. John it is!) there are several drawings which were taken from the same original by Mantegna in which he is carrying the staff. Our print was also taken from this. The original was unquestionably a Mantegna drawing and the hand which supported the staff was in the position of the one holding up the cloak over the knees in the engraving.

If Mr. Binsse will look at the back cover of our Bulletin for February, 1935, he will discover another engraving of the same subject with an inscription around the head which, when translated, corresponds to the verse in *St. Mark* I, 3, concerning St. John the Baptist: "The Voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord." Also in C. E. Clements, *Christian Symbols and Stories of the Saints*, on page 158 we find: "When painted as the Messenger" (St. John the Baptist) "he wears the hairy garment, and bears a cup, a reed cross, and a scroll with the inscription 'Vox clamantis in deserto'."

It is perfectly reasonable to have supposed that the figure was St. Roch but the traditional background and much book-learning goes to support the attribution to St. John.

Curator of Prints

HENRY SAYLES FRANCIS

and Drawings, Cleveland Museum of Art

FIELD NOTES

Treading Water

THE Report of the President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the year ending on September thirtieth last has just appeared. As president of the foundation which has most keenly interested itself in furthering the arts in this country what Dr. F. P. Keppel has to say is of great importance in art circles. This year the Corporation is, in a sense, treading water. The report on the pictorial arts prepared for the Corporation by Professor Arthur Pope is not yet ready for publication except in the briefest summary. A survey has just been begun of traveling exhibitions and national and local organizations; one assumes that this work is the "further study" which "recommendations as to the future" will have to await.

Mr. Pope points out that "progress in the fine arts, or visual arts . . . depends on more widespread and more thorough understanding of visual art as a whole. For this reason, education in the fine arts in schools, colleges, universities and museums is of the first importance. Since improved teaching in the schools and also in the museums depends on a supply of teachers better trained in the subject, improvement of advanced study in the colleges and universities which turn out the teachers is a primary end, and our chief efforts, for the time being, may well be concentrated on this point. Mr. Pope believes that the training of leaders in all aspects of the fine arts should be upon the same level of professional preparation as is the case today in law and medicine, and to that end he advises the building up of one or two comprehensive graduate schools of the visual arts, quite different from any existing art school or department. . . ."

Experiment at Cincinnati

A COURSE for adults seeking to give the phrase "art appreciation" tangible and workable meaning was begun last October at the Cincinnati Art Museum, being presented under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

"Its aim," states the announcement, "is to provide a foundation for appreciation and discrimination. . . . No previous training is required. The first year of this course, 1935-36, will be devoted to an intensive study of the fundamental principles underlying art as demonstrated in drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, and the decorative arts. The second year will be devoted to a study of good, bad and indifferent taste and to techniques and materials. The third year will deal with an historical outline of art. The advantage of holding such a course in a museum is that the students have an opportunity to work with original material.

"The objectives of the course are to encourage people to observe works of art with some understanding of the means used by artists to attain their ends and to develop critical standards for forming an estimate of quality. . . . Too frequently courses for adults develop into mere passive listening. . . .

"In the course, study means not only lectures, discussions, and reading, but also actual experience in the handling of line, form, color, abstract, and pictorial design. Therefore the work will be divided into lectures followed by discussions and practical laboratory experiments and there will be assigned problems and reading. The creative work is not designed primarily to make creative artists of students, but to provide them with a background for appreciation. Should they have or develop creative ability so much the better . . ."

Ella Simons Siple, wife of the Director of the Cincinnati Art Museum, is Carnegie Lecturer on the staff of the Museum and in that capacity will assist Director Siple in conducting the course.

Of outstanding interest is the showing arranged for the year's work in which mechanical illuminated exhibits with accompanying charts, reproductions, and selected examples of original works of art, illustrate the fundamentals. This exhibit encourages the student, and the casual visitors to the Museum as well, to participate in an active process of acquisition of knowledge.



REMBRANDT: CHRIST AT EMMAUS (OIL) 1648

Lent by the Louvre, Paris to the Exhibition, "Rembrandt and His Circle," at the Art Institute of Chicago

Rembrandt and His Circle, Chicago

ON December nineteenth the Art Institute of Chicago opened its important exhibition, "Rembrandt and His Circle." It will be on view through the nineteenth of this month. Not only a publicity feature is the inclusion of Rembrandt's "Christ at Emmaus" (1648) lent most generously by the Louvre, although it is the most important picture so far to have been sent overseas by the French Government.

However important this one great picture may be it merely serves to crown the exhibi-

tion. There are eight paintings by the master ranging from his early "realistic" to his later "visionary" periods. The earliest is the splendid portrait of the artist's father painted in 1629 and owned by the Art Institute. This is succeeded by "Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet," recently discovered and acquired for the Art Institute. Another picture owned in Chicago—by Mrs. Francis Neilson—shows his brilliant social portraiture: "Portrait of the Young Lady with a Fan," dated 1633.

The style of the forties is represented by the Institute's "Young Girl at an Open Half-

Door," which has just come back from the important Rembrandt show at the Rijksmuseum.

The A. W. Mellon Charitable and Educational Trust has sent two pictures of later execution, his own "Self Portrait" of 1658, one of the strongest of the long series of pictures of himself, and the "Young Man" of 1663, done a year after the "Syndics" and closely related to that great composition.

Rembrandt is known to have had about seventy pupils whose work has been frequently confused with his own. The present exhibition does not attempt to include all of them, but is limited to works of high quality reflecting his direct example. The Rijksmuseum has lent "Issac Blessing Jacob," by Govert Flinck. Barent Fabritius, brother of the more famous Carel,* and a close assistant of the master, is represented by "Girl Plucking Fowl," from Wildenstein and Company, New York; "Satyr and the Peasant," from Mrs. Paul M. Warburg; and "Adulteress before Christ," from the Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis, a picture which has sometimes been considered an original Rembrandt but is held by recent criticism to be "Fabritius retouched by Rembrandt." Rembrandt's last and most faithful pupil, Arent de Gelder, is represented by his "Esther and Mordecai" from the Rhode Island School of Design. Other followers represented are: Lievens, Bol, Van der Pluym, Philips de Koninck, Drost, and Maes.

There is one whole room of drawings, chiefly by Rembrandt, assembled from the Rijksmuseum, the Morgan Library, and the Widener Collection. A third room is given over to a selected group of the master's etchings, not only from the Institute's own collection but also from Lessing J. Rosenwald of Philadelphia. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts has sent certain outstanding etchings by his pupils.

* * *

Concurrently with the Rembrandt show the Art Institute presents the work of the much-publicized, mechano-abstract French painter, Fernand Léger, sponsored in this country by the Museum of Modern Art. Chicagoans will doubtless relish this opportunity to see

the work of what the news-release of the Institute calls a "strictly 'modern' painter." The one-man showing consists of eleven of his more important paintings and nineteen drawings and water colors.

* * *

Those who combine a love of dogs with their passion for art will be interested to know that the Institute's German shepherd dog, Sentry (Prince to his companions of the guard) not only entered the Great Lakes Dog Show, but won a cup on which was engraved: "Sentry. Art Institute of Chicago. For service. German Shepherd Dog Club of the Great Lakes. 1935."

Little Rock Museum Assured

WE hear that erection of the long wanted Fine Arts Building in City Park, Little Rock, Arkansas, is now assured. Word came that a grant from WPA added to gifts from citizens of Little Rock (the largest one of twenty-five thousand from an anonymous donor) makes the building possible. After its completion the building will house the collection of the Fine Arts Club of Arkansas, which now is in cramped quarters in the courthouse.

Puyallup Fair

SOMEWHAT belatedly we have a report about the art exhibition held last fall at the Western Washington Fair. The record attendance at the fair as a whole was also reflected in the increased numbers viewing the exhibition. This time, for a change, the galleries were wholly given over to work by artists of the west coast from Alaska to Mexico, featuring, however, the work of those from the State of Washington.

Allan Clark, nationally known sculptor, born in Seattle, commented on the exhibition: "I am more than pleased at the progress being made by the Pacific coast artists, whose work, as shown here, has a general soundness and sincerity, wholesome and satisfying. There is a pleasing absence of sectionalism and an evidence of individual expression and freedom from influence, but that

*See this Magazine for October, 1935. Pp. 583, 588, 589.

which gives me greatest pleasure is to find here in the Puyallup valley, and on the west coast, a movement and a group of people sincerely and unselfishly helping art and artists of the Pacific coast. My memory of earlier days was of the dearth of any financial or moral interest of art or artists. Those responsible, Mrs. Charles W. Orton, founder of the organization, and the Western Washington Fair, W. A. Linklater, president, are to be highly complimented."

First prize in the conservative group went to Paul M. Gustin for his painting, "Mount Baker"; first prize in the "broad" group to Peter Camfferman for his painting "Near a Mountain Stream."

Taste on Short Wave

APPARENTLY stirred by these words written by Anada K. Coomaraswamy, "Artists are not special kinds of men, but all men are special kinds of artists," a committee arranged a series of nine broadcasts starting in November and running until January twelfth dealing with the cultivation of taste.

These are being given over short wave station WIXAL, operated by the World Wide Broadcasting Corporation, a non-profit organization, in studios in the University Club, Boston. This series has been part of the regular activities of the University of the Air to whose work WIXAL is dedicated. For complete information as to enlightening programs in many educational fields write direct to the station.

The committee sponsoring this particular series is composed as follows: Alon Bement, Chairman; Mary Beatty Brady, Harmon Foundation; Albert Bender, San Francisco; Royal Bailey Farnum, Rhode Island School of Design; Dean M. E. Haggerty, University of Minnesota; Mrs. Robert Hutchins, sculptor, Chicago; Professor Arthur Pope, Harvard University; Dr. H. H. Powers, author, lecturer, Boston; and Francis Henry Taylor, Director, Worcester Art Museum.

The two remaining programs are: "Guatemalan Design," by Ruth Reeves, designer, on January fifth; "Art Service for Colleges," by

Audrey B. McMahon, Executive Secretary, College Art Association on January twelfth. Both programs are to be given at five-fifteen P.M., Eastern Standard Time. Dial 11.79 or 6.04 Mc.

Fiftieth Show of the Architectural League

DURING February the Architectural League of New York will hold its Fiftieth Annual Exhibition at the Fine Arts Galleries. The League has been a center for all the arts related to architecture for the past fifty years. Its members are drawn from the ranks of architects, painters, sculptors, landscape architects, and craftsmen.

This year the American Institute of Decorators will combine with the Architectural League in the exhibition. The whole exhibition will show the progress that has been made in the fields of their endeavor in a half century.

Texas Centennial Art Show

DALLAS is to be host to a large part of the country's floating population, during the Texas Centennial Exposition which is scheduled to open on June sixth. There will be an extensive art exhibition, arranged by Robert B. Harshe and Daniel Catton Rich of the Art Institute of Chicago, who made the art exhibition of Chicago's Century of Progress the most popular part of the fair.

The exhibit is of double significance since it will inaugurate the new building of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts which will be finished in the spring. The exhibition will parallel in certain ways the Chicago shows in 1933 and 1934. Galleries will be devoted to primitives and old masters lent for the occasion by leading museums and dealers. Other rooms will contain a survey of significant French painting of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There will also be an impressive group of contemporary works by leading foreign artists.

But American work will be featured, according to Dr. Harshe. In addition to a retrospective showing of such familiar men as Ryder, Homer, Eakins and Inness a number of galleries will be reserved for American

art of today. Against this background will be revealed with special fullness the work of artists of the Southwest and Texas. There will be a one-man room of the work of Frederic Remington, famed cowboy artist, including paintings, drawings, and bronzes.

The large central court of the Museum will be given over to an installation of monumental sculpture and tapestries. Water colors, prints, old and new, will round out the picture. At least one exhibit of decorative arts—a carefully selected room of antique lacquer, pottery, glass, textiles, and so on from Mexico, will be on view.

Japanese Screens, Boston

OPENING on December seventeenth, the present exhibition of Japanese screens now filling the new special exhibition galleries at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, will remain on view through February second.

Its collection of screens forms an important part of the great collection of Japanese art in the Museum. Although these screens have long been owned by the Museum, they are to all intents and purposes new accessions as lack of space has prevented more than a fraction of them being shown. Even on this occasion the showing is limited to the screens which illustrate flowers, birds, and beasts. Fifty-four examples of this type, beginning

with those of the fifteenth-century master, Sesshu, and extending to the work of the nineteenth-century men, are included.

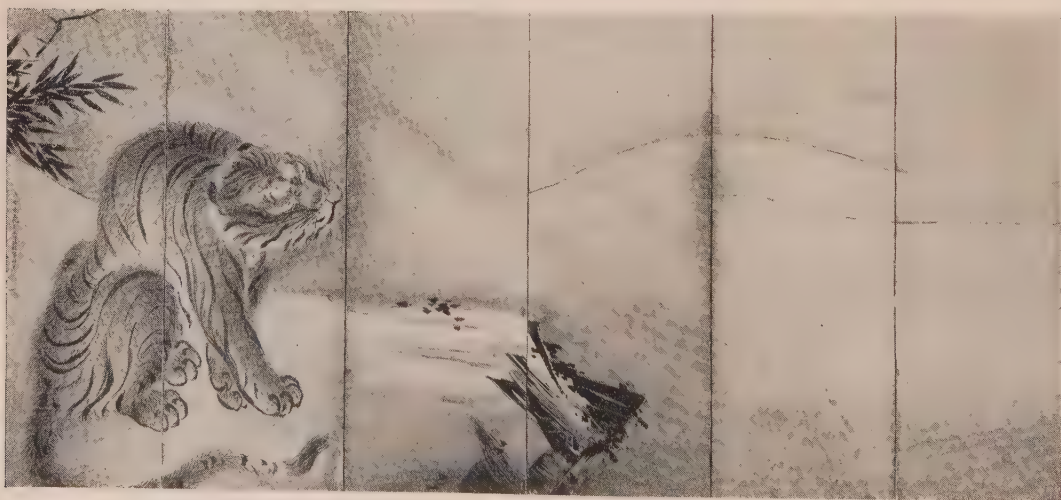
That Boston's collection is second only to those in Japan envious museums to the south and west are well aware. They also know that the arrival of the screens in Boston was an event of the 1880's when Dr. William Sturgis Bigelow, Dr. Charles Goddard Weld, and Professor Ernest Fenellosa were traveling in Japan. At that moment Japan was willing to part with her treasures as never before nor since, and although the art was entirely strange to the Western eye, yet these three students realized the greatness of the available treasures and secured all they could. Their purchases, including all classifications of Chinese and Japanese art, formed the basis of the Boston Museum's collections.

Colorado Springs

MR. ARCHIE MUSICK of Colorado Springs has been good enough to write us as follows, bringing us up to date on events at the foot of Pike's Peak:

The very worthwhile exhibition of the Mr. and Mrs. John W. Garrett collection of French and Italian moderns, sponsored by the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, afforded a number of examples of painters who,

(Continued on page 57)



TOHAKU, 1539-1610: TIGER (SIX-FOLD PAPER SCREEN—ONE OF PAIR)

Included in the Exhibition of Japanese Screens at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston through February second

NEW BOOKS ON ART

Leonardo at Windsor Castle

THE best place to study Leonardo's artistic personality is Windsor. The collection of his drawings there is so large that the sixty-four pages cut out and lost in the eighteenth century contained almost as many drawings as are now known in the world outside of the Royal Collection. The *Catalogue of the Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci at Windsor Castle** is, therefore, a magnificent reference book for students of Leonardo the artist. Mr. Clark gives a careful history of the collection, authenticates and dates each drawing, and relates each to Leonardo's manuscripts, paintings, and drawings elsewhere. Volume I contains the text, in large legible type, and Volume II reduced reproductions of the drawings arranged roughly by subject, as they are catalogued at Windsor. The subject arrangement, though it has a value of its own, and the reduced reproductions force the serious student to use a magnifying glass and make a chronological table. But facsimiles in original size are expensive, and all Leonardo's drawings will eventually be published in full size and color by the Commissione Vinciana.

Clark's catalogue is an important contribution to the work of dating and publishing the corpus of Leonardo's manuscripts and drawings, a work that only now, over four hundred years after his death, approaches completion. Although Clark does not attempt to criticize Leonardo's scientific and mathematical researches, or to translate texts (with one slight exception), or even to interpret difficult passages, he does transcribe all the text written on the Windsor drawings which has not been printed before, amounting to more than fifteen thousand words. All Leonardo scholars will be grateful to him for completing this difficult task. He rightly feels that textual difficulties are best solved by Italians, and that Richer, in his *Literary Works of*

Leonardo da Vinci, translated the most important passages.

Clark tries in every case to decide which of the six hundred odd drawings are Leonardo's, and to date them. The problems of authenticity were not many. Berenson in his *Drawings of the Florentine Painters* made a critical selection "invaluable as a criterion of authenticity." But, before that, Morelli was the first to expound systematically the idea that left-handed Leonardo not only reversed the shapes of the letters in writing, but the direction of the lines in drawing as well. Clark says "the diagonal shading invariably runs down from left to right" but does not add, as Morelli does, that Leonardo occasionally shaded from right to left in representing spherical objects. Drawings in the Windsor collection, once thought Leonardo's, but since proved copies, or original works of other artists, are included in the catalogue for completeness. The juxtaposition of Leonardo's work to the merely Leonardesque is more eloquently instructive than many paragraphs on style.

Dating the drawings was the cataloguer's chief task. The Windsor volume was originally made up by Pompeo Leoni of loose sheets and sketch books acquired from the family of Leonardo's pupil, Francesco Melzi. Anny E. Popp is the only person to attempt with any success a chronological arrangement of Leonardo's drawings. Clark uses various types of evidence to check his sense of stylistic development. Studies for the "Adoration," painted in 1481, and the "Last Supper," commissioned in 1496, are datable; as are sheets containing dates or datable references. Others may be dated by type of paper or handwriting, the varying periods of which were worked out by Calvi. At least one dated drawing was discovered for every five years which establishes a scale to measure the others. Clark does not use this scale in a dogmatic fashion, however, and recognizes an important aspect of Leonardo's mind, when he says his style was "so dependent on his imagination that it varied from hour to hour,

**Catalogue of the Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci at Windsor Castle*. By Kenneth Clark. New York, 1935: The Macmillan Co. Cambridge, 1935: The Cambridge University Press. 2 vols., 40. Price, \$25.00.

and no theory of its evolution can give more than a general drift." This point is illustrated in the early sheet, 12276, where, among rather dry and expressionless profiles of men and women and lions, we find a drawing of the Virgin and Child and St. John where every line is functional and every gesture full of tenderness and emotion. Thus Clark not only carefully compiles the most reliable data on each drawing but by his original observations and study is often able to throw new light on Leonardo as artist and scientist. He believes that the head and shoulders of a child, 12519, and the drapery on a kneeling figure, 12521, are late and may have been drawn as fresh studies for the National Gallery Virgin of the Rocks, so presenting the possibility that Leonardo may have thought of revising the whole composition.

Thought provoking suggestions occur again and again in the catalogue. No adequate consideration and evaluation of Leonardo's thought can be made until Sarton has completed his survey of the fifteenth century which is to be the fifth volume in his *Introduction to the History of Science*. But it is illuminating to have pointed out that scholars may have been too hasty in supposing that Leonardo anticipated the Copernican theory because he wrote on 12669, "El sol non si move." On 12326 and in MS. F in Paris, dated ten years later than 12669, he charted the solar system with the earth as the center and the sun definitely moving around it.

The catalogue does not reproduce all the anatomical drawings at Windsor that have already been published, but discusses and dates each in the text, and reproduces representative drawings for each date. It is convenient and helpful to have this important portion of Leonardo's work presented all together and in compact form.

The catalogue, although beautifully printed and bound and carefully compiled, shows some signs of haste. The index is inadequate and has no entries for drapery, silver-point, war machines, embryo and other subjects of the drawings. Sainsbury's name is spelled Saintsbury (p. xi), and McMurich's important study, *Leonardo the Anatomist*, 1930, is not mentioned. Also some of Clark's

statements are more dogmatic than even the brevity of a catalogue warrants.

But these errors are the merest details. Clark draws his conclusions from five years study of the original drawings, and walks safely between the two extremist groups of scholars, neither attributing everything Leonardesque to Leonardo, nor taking away everything imperfect. Leonardo was capable of producing weak and careless drawings, but none that are both weak and painstaking can be proved to be his. The whole range of Leonardo's growth as an artist is presented in these drawings at Windsor, the early pen and ink, sometimes tentative and modest in line; the magic silver-point (this period is least well represented) and the later, heavier, more fully modeled chalk studies and late pen and ink.

Anatomy, flowers, fruit, nudes, war machines, drapery, children, masqueraders, horses, profiles, caricatures, landscapes—the bewildering variety of his interests is represented. One studies them and feels Leonardo's successes are explained, but does not find, even in his feeblest drawings, an adequate explanation of his failures.

MAUREEN COBB MABBOTT

Photography, 1935

WITH the leading magazines full of photographs, and with bookstores crowded with books telling their story primarily through the camera's lens, it is apparent that photography has become a definite form of expression. These two books,* one entirely American, the other international in scope, isolate the best of this work.

U. S. Camera, 1935 is the more ambitious and more startling of the two. One hundred and ninety-three black-and-white and thirteen color photographs are presented on quarto pages bound with a spiral wire. It is difficult to make a choice of the most significant work,

(Continued on page 64)

**Modern Photography: The Studio Annual of Camera Art, 1935-1936*. Edited by C. G. Holme. New York, 1935. Studio Publications, Incorporated. Price: paper, \$2.50; cloth, \$3.50.

U. S. Camera, 1935. Edited by T. J. Maloney. New York, 1935. William Morrow & Company. Price, \$2.75.

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NEWS AND GOSSIP

By L. B. HOUFF, JR.

A Calendar

THE new Metropolitan Museum of Art calendar for 1936 has just come to my desk. Among the riff-raff of atrocious calendars which are dumped on the American people each year at this time, it stands out like the Star of Christmas.

Nicely printed and designed, and illustrated with six beautiful color prints, this is a calendar you can refer to all day—without getting the jitters, and wishing something could be done about calendars in general.

You can order a copy, by mail, for \$1.10. Or, if you are in New York, stop in at the Museum and get one for \$1.00. It will be money well spent!

Another Metropolitan Note

WORD has just come from G. L. Greenway, Assistant Secretary, that the Metropolitan Museum will present a series of four free concerts by a symphony orchestra conducted by David Mannes, at eight o'clock on the evenings of January 4, 11, 18, and 25.

The concerts are made possible by a contribution from the Davison Fund, Inc., founded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

A second series of concerts is planned for four Saturday evenings in March.

Fireside Evenings

FOR a long time, I have had the feeling that if our larger museums could find some informal means of bringing their members together, there would develop in their communities a more active interest in art.

Rossiter Howard, out in Kansas City, seems to have accomplished this purpose, in a unique way. I quote from the October bulletin of the Art Institute:

"The Fireside Evenings last year furnished the liveliest activity of the members. They will be continued this year in two courses, usually on the first and third Tuesday.

"The first series will be devoted to a discussion of the current exhibitions. The second will be given to a very informal discussion course in art appreciation, particularly in the field of modern art.

"The subject of the evening will be presented by Mr. Howard and discussed by the members. Nothing is so valuable in the development of understanding as free discussion if it is controlled and directed toward an end.

"After each course, supper will be served in the tea room, followed by a smoke and talk."

Art is an intimate and *living* part of our everyday life. Let's divorce it from the ascots and frock coats, and really enjoy ourselves.

Membership Growth

YOU will be glad to learn that from September 19 through October 14, Individual memberships in the Federation increased 9.3 per cent.

In the first eight months of the present fiscal year, the net growth exceeds the entire previous year.

Also, during this same period, Chapter memberships passed the peak in all our history. There are now five hundred and fifteen affiliated organizations—each an integral unit of this nation-wide Federation.

Isochromatic Exhibition

A RELEASE from the M. Grumbacher Company (one of our new advertisers, by the way), states that several units of its First Isochromatic Exhibition are being circulated.

The exhibitor pays no charge, other than one-way transportation. If you are interested, write Grumbacher at 460 West 34th Street, New York.

The purpose of the Isochromatic Exhibition is to prove that paintings can be given

(Continued on page 61)

FIELD NOTES

(Continued from page 52)

tired of academic formulae, strike out on an individual tack.

From the time modernism began to filter into these Western hinterlands, the question has been repeatedly asked, "why do they do that way?" The economic, or scientific, or psychiatric causes that presaged the fauvistic charge are a little obscure now. It would be more interesting to comment on why American camp followers *try* to do that way.

This exhibition includes Modigliani's famous "French Surgeon," Casoratti's portrait of his mother, two exquisite color gems by Dufresne, a typical Utrillo and Segonzac. Derain's complete and well-ordered "Still Life" looks as though its structure had been filched from an early Madonna and Child. The younger painters represented are Briançon, Roger Chaster, Andre Planson, Achille Funi, and Lelia Caetani. Mrs. Garrett is to be commended on her encouragement of undeveloped potentiality, a practice alien to the West.

During the month of December were shown a comprehensive exhibition of the work of George Grosz.

The new half-million dollar fine arts building is being rushed toward completion, and will be ready for occupancy about March first. The lofty aim of this new merger is something pertaining to national and international scope in the fields of painting, drama, music, and perhaps the modern dance. The best talents procurable in the East will be transplanted here, to match this architectural achievement.

Complementary to this cause, a local group known as the Pike's Peak Painters, being somewhat sympathetic to Benton's creed that there *are* seeds of art in native Western soil, have organized a school that is to be coöperative in instruction. It will include, besides the usual drawing from the model, landscape, an informal study of past masters, a study of the principles in mural painting, modeling, casting, and ceramics with their concomitant mysteries of glazing.

Rumors have hinted at dissension and dis-

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Venetian Red
Yellow Ochre Light
Zinc White

35c group

French Ultramarine Blue
Permanent Blue
Zinc Yellow

50c group

Alizarin Crimson
Cadmium Yellow Pale
Cadmium Yellow Light
Cadmium Yellow Medium
Cadmium Orange
Cadmium Red Light
Cadmium Red Medium
Cadmium Red Deep
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loyalty; but the difference in the aims of the two factions is so marked that there is no reason why they should not coöperate on an amicable plane.

The Pike's Peak Painters include: C. R. Bunnell, former landscape instructor at Kansas City Art Institute and exhibitor at Carnegie International; Grace L. Bartlett, former student of Davey, Lawson, and Robinson; Laurence B. Field, former landscape and lithograph instructor at Broadmoor and product of the Cleveland School and the Kunstgewerbeschule, Vienna; Lawrence G. Heller who has studied at Yale, Pittsburgh, Paris, and Colorado Springs; Tabor E. Utley, life instructor at Pueblo Junior College, lithographer, and former student of Lawson and Robinson; Archie Musick, student of Davey, Lawson, Benton, Macdonald-Wright and Boardman Robinson; George V. Bartlett, marine painter, and Chase Varney. The last two named are largely self-taught.

Socially speaking, the preference of this new group leans a little toward coffee, rather than tea.

Fabulous Frick Collection Opens

ON Fifth Avenue between Seventieth and Seventy-first Streets, New York, a new public museum of art, which has as nucleus the Henry Clay Frick mansion, opened to the waiting public on December sixteenth. More aesthetically ponderable than the mansion is the collection which it houses. It was originally gathered by the Pittsburgh coke magnate with the idea that it would be given

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to the City of New York and so "to the nation," after Mrs. Frick's death. A fifteen-million-dollar endowment was provided for the care and expansion of the collection.

Since 1931 the trustees* have worked steadily to complete the transformation. Today all can see that they worked well. They have selected Frederick M. Clapp, Professor of Fine Arts of the University of Pittsburgh, as director. They have put him in charge of a museum planned so that all visitors may "gain the most from their hours of inspection."

The chief part of the collection is composed of Dutch, Flemish, Spanish, German, and Italian paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Eighteenth-century English portraits and examples of other English schools, and the French schools are also represented. So much for its scope. It contains as well a number of famous pictures, such as Rembrandt's "Self-Portrait" (1658) Titian's "Man in a Red Cap," Giovanni Bellini's "St. Francis in Ecstasy," Vermeer's "Mistress and Maid Servant," Velasquez's "Philip IV of Spain," and Duccio's "Temptation of Christ," to mention a few.

The Frick Collection is open to the public daily except Sundays from ten until four. Tickets are required for admission; they may be obtained by writing, telephoning, or calling in person at the gallery. The management

* Childs Frick, President; Andrew W. Mellon, Vice-president; George F. Baker, Treasurer; Miss Helen Frick, Secretary; John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Junius Morgan, Horace Havemeyer, and Maidland Griggs. A less cumbersome group, the Committee on Organization and Policy—Messrs. Rockefeller, Griggs, and Frick, with Miss Frick and Mr. Baker serving as alternates—has been most directly responsible for the work accomplished.

reserves the right to limit the number of visitors present in the gallery at one time. Accredited students can have special tickets. Guides and lecturers are available to interpret the pictures.

WHICH END OF THE HORN?

(Continued from page 5)

tion of the exhibition, of ten dollars per month for sculptures, five dollars for water colors and drawings, and one dollar each for prints.

"[I] hope that the results of this experiment will aid somewhat in the discussion of so important a step forward. . . ." There can be little doubt that her experiment will do just what she expects of it. Certainly her courage in meeting the artists half way is a grand example.

THE MAGAZINE OF ART is pleased to join, as representative of the Federation which publishes it, in the effort to discuss the problem freely from all angles. Mr. Phillips' letter last month and those printed in this issue * may prove to be of some help. What is needed on all sides is open-mindedness and open-heartedness. This new year presents a good many unsolved problems and a good many readjustments. If the American art world is truly alive then it will prove sufficiently adaptable to change in accordance with the new demands that are made upon it.

F. A. WHITING, JR.

Conventions in the Art Field—1936

Western Arts Association, Nashville, Tennessee, April 1-4.

Southern States Art League, 16th Annual Convention, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, April 3-4.

Eastern Arts Association, Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, April 15-18.

Association of Art Museum Directors, New York City, May 9-11.

American Association of Museums, New York City, May 11-13.

American Federation of Arts, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, May 13-16. (Reservations have been made for these four days; it may be that the first day will be cancelled to avoid an overlap with the convention of the American Association of Museums.)

* Beginning on page 43.

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*Publication date February 15.

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

(Continued from page 42)

The quality that has kept De Chirico's surrealism fresh throughout all these years is its architectural classicism. It is never Freudian in the same disintegrative sense that Dali is Freudian. De Chirico is a surgeon performing a delicate operation, not a maniac mutilating himself or others out of sheer perversity. He is also something of an academician. There is the smell of the art school in many of these early pictures—in technique more often than subject, and frequently in both. But he used academic subject matter as it was never used before by any contemporary artist. "Le Rêve Transformé," painted in 1908, was the first mature expression of De Chirico's personal fantasy. The expansion of this fantasy through the next ten years is excellently documented at the Pierre Matisse Gallery with twenty-five canvases, some well known, others hardly at all.

PORGYLAND COMES TO THE MARIE HARRIMAN GALLERY

I AM frankly troubled by the pictures which Henry Botkin brought back with him from his recent excursion into the deep south, the south of cawn pone and possum, chain gangs and sharecroppers. What I should like to ask Massah Botkin is where in the name of Fielding Burke, Erskine Caldwell, T. E. Stribling, Julia Peterkin, or even the *New York Times* did he find such bucolic Negroes. Undoubtedly he found them in the same place that Thomas Benton found his, in sweet Porgyland where life is one continuous crap game with a Negro spiritual and a little moonstruck swaining thrown in for good measure.

The pity of it, Massah Botkin, is that you know how to paint; that is to say, you know all the tricks, perhaps too many for your own good. You use them with talent, certainly, but not with conviction, an inner conviction, a fresh plastic seeing of the world we live in. What I find particularly distressing about your work is the absence of any positive quality, whether good or bad. You neither exasperate nor gratify. You just are. For those people who don't like to be molested by pictures, I can heartily recommend yours.

NEWS AND GOSSIP

(Continued from page 56)

longer life by the use of carefully selected colors and painting grounds.

More than eight hundred artists submitted one picture each. On the back of each canvas, full data is recorded. The canvases will be examined periodically, to check on the permanency of the colors, and the results made available to artists, schools, and institutions.

First Federation Monograph

THE first Federation monograph—*John Marin: The Man and His Work*, by E. M. Benson, is off the press, and (at my deadline) more than six hundred copies have been delivered.

Not only is this the Federation's first monograph, but it is the first exhaustive and critical analysis of Marin, by a man who knows him, understands his work, and is familiar with his habitat.

Benson spent the past summer in Maine, visiting Marin's haunts, and actually lived in a cottage once occupied by Marin, at Small Point Harbor.

Regardless of your feelings toward Marin, this is a book you should have. If now you do not care for his work, and if you are open-minded, after reading the book, I believe you will discover a quality in his things which has not been apparent before.

Physically, the book is most attractive, too—bound in cloth, and die-stamped in blue. The jacket was designed by Marin himself, the book by Josephy. There are fifty-one illustrations, in color and in halftone.

Cooperstown and Albany

ONE of the educational services of the Federation is the preparation of study outlines for Chapters. The outlines are really syllabi on special phases of art, prepared to meet specific needs.

The Cooperstown, New York, Art Study Club is, this season, using an outline on "Appreciation of Modern French and American Painting," composed of twenty programs. Finding it very much to their liking, the Club mentioned the fact to the Albany Institute of History and Art, and a copy of the out-

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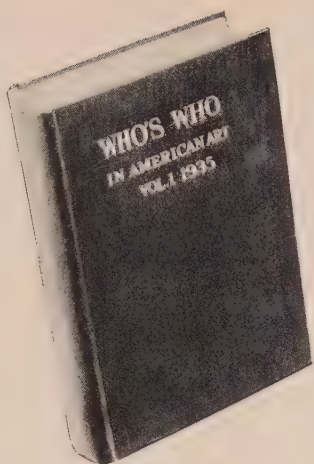
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CONTENTS

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OBITUARIES . . . For the year 1934, and the first ten months of 1935.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDEX . . . Every artist in the Biographical Directory is also located, by State, in the Geographical Index.

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line has been requested by the latter Chapter.

If this service can be of assistance to you,* tell your needs to Miss Florence Berryman (801 Barr Building, Washington, National Headquarters of the Federation). She will be glad to help you.

Raymond & Raymond

ON my visit to New York last month, I stopped by the new Raymond & Raymond retail store, at 40 East 52d Street.

The façade of the building gave me an indication of what was to follow—one of the most attractively decorated and appointed modern interiors I have yet discovered.

While there, I also learned that one can secure almost any subject published in color reproduction. European, as well as American publishers are represented—and the sales clerks know what they are about.

Aside from the sales end, there will be constantly changing exhibitions of color reproductions.

Of Constitutions

DURING the past few months, a number of letters have come to us from people interested in forming an art association, club, or other art organization in their community.

Almost invariably, one of the chief points of concern is the "constitution."

The legal significance of the word "constitution" has the tendency either to stiffen our mental processes, or to scare us to death.

Actually, framing a constitution is easy—if you have a plan or outline!

Remember, first of all, that a constitution is merely the act of establishing, and the method of governing, an organization. Here is a specimen constitution in outline:

Article

1. Name of organization
2. Object or objects
3. Officers
 - a. Titles
 - b. Method of election
 - c. Tenure of office
4. Committees
 - a. Kinds
 - b. Duties or purposes

* This service available only for organization or group use.

5. Membership *
 - a. Classes
 - b. Dues
6. Method and Procedure of Amending Constitution
7. Parliamentary Rules — Authority for Legal Conduct.

This may be called an outline of a basic constitution. Of course, it would differ, in almost every case, depending on the character of the organization. For instance, if part of an organization's income is to be derived from municipal sources, an article covering this should be included.

By-laws to a constitution are rules of conduct, not set forth in the constitution proper, and subordinate to it. By-laws include such things as:

Conventions or general meetings—purposes and dates;
 Board, or governing body, meetings;
 Dates of officers' elections;
 Duties of officers;
 Activities (not included under "Object");
 Members' privileges, and regulations; and
 Order of business at meetings.

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HOW would you like to visit one of our great museums, see its masterpieces, hear its collections discussed by an authority—without leaving your own community.

You can do just that, through the medium of the Federation's illustrated traveling lectures.

There is available for you, for instance, a lecture on The Metropolitan Museum, by Huger Elliott, and a special lecture on "The American Wing" of the Metropolitan, by Charles Over Cornelius; one on the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, by Marion Evans Doane; and one on the Art Institute of Chicago, by Robert B. Harshe and Daniel Catton Rich.

This year, the Federation is circulating more than forty lectures, covering practically every phase of art activity. Written by authorities, in a thoroughly fascinating fashion, they are easy-to-understand, easy-to-use; enter-

* If a membership organization.

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taining, as well as interestingly instructive. The only equipment you need is a stereopticon for projecting the slides. The text is read from a typed manuscript.

The rental is nominal, five dollars each. Chapters of the Federation may use two lectures each year, without charge. Active members may also use two, free, and Associates receive a fifty per cent discount.

Would you like to have a complete catalog?

*N. B. Make your request for any of the
above lectures right away.*

NEW BOOKS ON ART

(Continued from page 54)

so rich is this collection. Appropriately, the first page is a portrait of that pioneer in American expressionistic photography, Alfred Stieglitz, by Edward Steichen. Other portraits of distinction include Einstein, by Tony Von Horn, the Irish actor Barry Fitzgerald by Alfredo Valente, and Alexander Woollcott, informally caught by the candid camera of Rudolf H. Hoffman during a broadcast. Of particular interest is the section "Illustration." William Rittase points his camera down on a motor boat which is cutting a silver streak across rippled water to the light; we do not need the caption "Speed" to share the photographer's emotion. Margaret Bourke-White has preserved the white splendor of the sails of the cup-defender yacht "Vantie." That enjoyment which we receive when an infinitude of detail is so presented that it can easily be grasped is afforded by Cartier-Bresson's view of a French public square. The contrast between New York's uptown skyline and quasi-rural Central Park has become hackneyed, but Dr. D. J. Ruzicka, in his print "Magic City," has been able to create a mystic mood by careful use of reflections. The section "Miniatures" has a foreword by Remie Lohse, whose study of a wrestler in his dressing room after a match is one of the best of its type. Such work as F. Allan Morgan's "Unemployed," the interior of a relief shelter, would be almost impossible without the inconspicuous and ultra-sensitive miniature camera. It is a pity that the grimly realistic photographs of rioting remain anonymous; much of today's best work is done by these press cameramen. The color work, an innovation in photographic annuals, is varying. Steichen, with a nude negress against a deep blue background clutching a sheaf of corn, Bruehl-Bourges, with a still-life of copper pots, and H. I. Williams, with a bowl of fruit, succeed the best. Nickolas Muray has done better work than his garish baby with playthings. Could Alfred Cheney Johnston forsake sentimentality, we should find his color work excellent.

U. S. Camera 1935 is lively, dramatic,

humorous, American. The majority of its work is commercial in character; industrial subjects predominate. At times it is almost naïve; it is quite unselfconscious.

Modern Photography 1935-6 is less ambitious, and more carefully edited. The ninety-five plates are arranged so that opposite pages complement one another; in a few words the editor compares the two. Technically, the bulk of the work is below the standard of *U. S. Camera*; aesthetically the level is higher. While the American annual is the compilation of practical photographers, whose eye for technique is perhaps over-critical, the British publication is the choice of a connoisseur who is interested in working out a reasonable aesthetic of the camera, and who prefers the beautiful to the dramatic.

For example, from the prolific work of Steichen *U. S. Camera* selected an action shot of dancers, a photograph both startling and of technical virtuosity. *The Studio*, on the other hand, selected his static but beautifully lighted and composed "Torso" which originally appeared in *Vogue*. Mr. Holme, the editor, remarks: "The photographer today makes his own design by selecting those forms which seem to him expressive, and discarding any aim at completeness." The same comment might apply to Ansel Adam's sparkling view of the upper half of a California courthouse. One of the finest pictures is the railroad yard by Erno Vadas, with a locomotive in the foreground pouring forth a tower of smoke. Here are examples of the two outstanding miniature cameramen of today, both Germans: Dr. Paul Wolff with an Alpine subject, "Storm Clouds over the Zugspitze," and Dr. Erich Salomon, well known for his intimate studies of diplomats, with a shot of two London bobbies in the guard room of Buckingham Palace. The foreword by Francis Bruguiere is a plea for less documentary and more imaginative photography. An article by John Havinden, "To the Beginner in Advertising Photography," is unfortunately none too successful as exposition. For example: "The print having reached the desired density is then rinsed in clear water and put into the fixing bath." Every package of sensitized paper contains these instructions,

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THE MAN AND HIS WORK

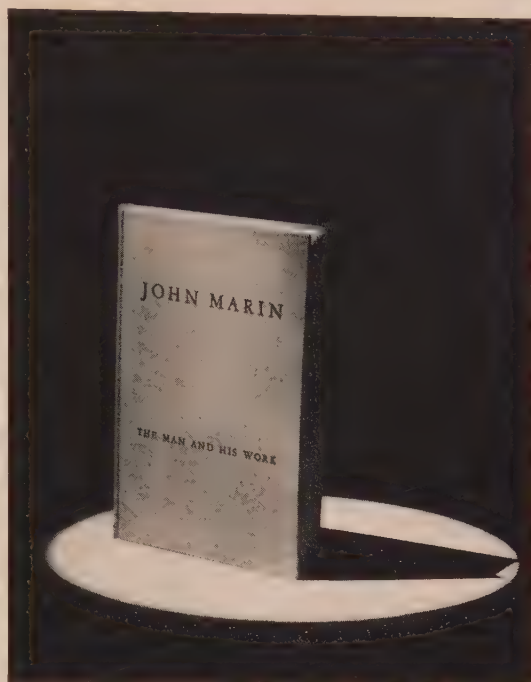
BY E. M. BENSON

John Marin is as fresh and vigorous as the sea, the sky, the rocks and the coast—the subjects which he paints.

As a natural consequence, the man explains the artist. A picture of the two, in juxtaposition, gives you a new point of view toward Marin's work.

If you are already an admirer of Marin, of course you want this first critical appraisal of the man and his work.

And if you have never liked Marin, you want the book anyway. For, as Aline Kistler writes about the monograph in PRINTS:



"Marin has not been understood even by the hundreds of people who are willing to credit the assumption of critics that his work is significant. Even dealers who have found Marin's work profitable have often failed to find reason for his apparent idiosyncrasies. It is thus important that a writer of the caliber of E. M. Benson should painstakingly analyze both the man and his work, his motives and his accomplishment."

"John Marin, The Man and His Work," is a book you will thoroughly enjoy—every word, from cover to cover.

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Two articles, copiously illustrated, reviewing the great International Exhibition at Burlington House. Mr. Warner is pre-eminently fitted for the job, as he is Keeper of the Oriental Department, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.

THE PRESENT-DAY STYLE

By Josef Binder, of Vienna

Being some ideas on its development, by a world-famous poster designer and teacher. Illustrated by examples of work by his American students.

THE UNFALSIFIABLE IMAGE

By Charles Harris Whitaker

An inquisitor of architectural loose-thinking, Mr. Whitaker says that the unalterable record of a civilization, or an age, is its buildings. Here is a record which does not lie.

FORM THROUGH REPRESENTATION

By Walter Abell

A sequel to Mr. Abell's article, "The Limits of Abstraction," which appeared in the December, 1935, issue. In this new article, he shows what richness and quality has existed, and can exist in representational form, the form of meaning.

THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART

AMERICA'S LEADING ART PUBLICATION

yet the beginner is not told what a fixing bath is, or how to make one.

Both books will be welcomed not only for their intrinsic value, but also for the wealth of technical information which they unobtrusively contain. Data is given on the camera, lens, stop, exposure, and film for every photograph. Both publications indicate the trend photography is taking today. Having mastered technique, and having abandoned the imitation of painting, photographers are becoming more interested in commenting on our civilization rather than merely recording its outer pattern.

BEAUMONT NEWHALL

Ireland and Persia

IF IT WERE only as examples of excellent color printing both these books* would merit respectful attention. But they are more than that; their primary importance lies in the quality of the manuscripts which they interpret and reproduce. The *Book of Kells* is one of the undiminished wonders of early Christendom; and this manuscript of the *Poems of Nizami* is by common consent among the most exquisitely conceived and illustrated of many fine Persian books. For that reason we are all fortunate to have this opportunity to enjoy them even at one remove, and we are certainly beholden to *The Studio* for having issued them.

Of the two scholars, Sir Edward Sullivan devotes more space to minutiae of specialized interest. The puzzle of exactly dating this Irish Gospel manuscript is still unsolved, but it almost certainly belongs to the seventh or eighth century. The fact that it was stolen from the church at Kells in 1006, when it was already called the "chief relic of the western world," is established. To the Anglo-Saxon layman, as to critics and historians of the past century, other things about it may prove more puzzling; for example the serpentine and interlaced designs and the miscalled "grotesque"

* *The Book of Kells*. Preface by Sir Edward Sullivan. Fourth Edition. New York, 1933. Studio Publications, Inc. xvi + 48 pp., 24 facsimile plates. Price, \$10.00.

The Poems of Nizami. Described by Laurence Bin-yon. New York, 1928. Studio Publications, Inc. 31 pp., 16 facsimile plates. Price, \$10.00.

and "hideous" representations of men and beasts.

A reason for that bewilderment, advanced by Dr. F. Keller, is quoted by Sir Edward on pages 42 and 43: "In all these ornaments there breathes a peculiar spirit, which is foreign to the people of the West: there is in them a something mysterious which imparts to the eye a certain feeling of uneasiness and suspense. . . . The variety of these forms . . . their luxuriant development, often extravagant, but sometimes uncommonly delicate and lovely . . . must have been originated in the East, or, at least, have their prototypes there. That the Irish system of ornamentation does actually find an analogy in Eastern countries is proved by the illustrations published by C. Knight in a small work on Egypt. We find there the serpentine bands of the Irish ornaments appearing already in the oldest Egyptian and Ethiopian manuscripts, and with a similarity of colour and combination truly astonishing. . . ." The similarity would, perhaps, be less "truly astonishing" if noted in manuscripts created closer to the Near East. But stumbling on such a phenomenon in the North Atlantic, the English-speaking world has just cause for amazement.

The second manuscript, thoroughly Oriental in origin and feeling, presents no such inconsistency. Strictly confined, but no less fruitful within its limits, is the sixteenth-century Persian convention found in the miniatures illustrating the *Poems of Nizami*.

Mr. Laurence Binyon has dwelt in less detail on the problems of scholarly interest. But his thirty-one pages—as beautifully written as one would expect—supply us with ample information about the manuscript itself, the painters who illustrated it for Shah Tahmasp, painting in Persia, the life of Nizami the poet, and summaries of the five poems. By guiding us direct to the plates in connection with the passages they illustrate, he gives us a definite frame of reference sufficient to heighten measurably our delight and understanding.

The art of both these books is alien to our modern world, but its strangeness can be appreciated, as well as discounted, by the romanticism of an eclectic age which uses all

the tools of modern scientific scholarship to bend the shapes and symbols of the past into a pattern which will help us to give our own life form and meaning. F. A. WHITING, JR.

New York Exhibitions—January

(Listed through the coöperation of the "New York Art Calendar")

American Fine Arts Galleries, 215 W. 57th St. 45th Annual Exhibition of the Nat'l Ass'n of Women Painters and Sculptors, Jan. 25 to Feb. 11.

An American Place, 509 Madison Ave. New paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe, Jan. 7 to Feb. 27.

Another Place, 43 W. 8th St. Paintings and drawings by Frank H. Schwarz, Jan. 4 to Jan. 30.

Architectural League of New York, 115 E. 40th St. Julian Peabody Memorial Exhibition, Jan. 20 to Feb. 1.

Arden Gallery, 460 Park Ave. Small portraits,

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- still life, water colors by Catherine Gibson Van Cortlandt, Jan. 14 to Jan. 27.
- Argent Gallery*, 42 W. 57th St. Paintings by Emily Nichols Hatch, water colors by Alfred L. Howes, etchings by Margaret Manuel, to Jan. 11; paintings by Margaret Cooper, photographs of Mexico by Julian R. Tinkham, Jan. 13 to Feb. 1; work by Luis Hidalgo, Jan. 14 to Feb. 27.
- Brooklyn—Grant Studios*, 110 Remsen St. 20th Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Brooklyn Society of Artists, Inc., Jan. 6 to Jan. 28.
- Brooklyn Museum*, Eastern Pkwy. Modern European wood cuts, to Jan. 13; Humor in Art, to Jan. 22; English Brass Rubings, to Jan. 29.
- Brummer*, 53 E. 57th St. Sculpture by Jacques Lipchitz, to Jan. 31.
- Contemporary Arts*, 41 W. 54th St. Oils and water colors by Edmund Quincy, to Jan. 18; oils, water colors and encaustics by Milton Douthat, Jan. 20 to Feb. 8.
- Downtown Gallery*, 113 W. 13th St. Recent paintings by Alexander Brook, to Jan. 18.
- Dudensing*, 697 Fifth Ave. Compositions and portraits by Blackstone, Jan. 7 to 31.
- Durand-Ruel*, 12 E. 57th St. Still life and flowers by XIX century French artists, to Jan. 21.
- Ehrich-Newhouse*, 578 Madison Ave. Landscapes and portraits by Lorentz Kleiser, Jan. 4 to Jan. 24; portraits by C. A. Ricciardi, Jan. 21 to Feb. 5; landscapes and portraits by Eric Goldberg, Jan. 27 to Feb. 11.
- Eighth Street Playhouse*, 52 W. 8th St. Oils by Charles Lofgren, to Jan. 4; lithographs by Blanche Grambs, Jan. 20 to Feb. 1.
- Fifteen Gallery*, 37 W. 57th St. Recent water colors by Marion Monks Chase, Carl Gordon Cutler, Charles Hopkinson, Charles Hovey Pepper, Jan. 6 to Feb. 1.
- Guild Art Gallery*, 37 W. 57th St. Landscapes by Lloyd Ney, Jan. 6 to Jan. 26.
- Harriman, Marie*, 61-63 E. 57th St. Architectural projects by Harold Sterner, to Jan. 11.
- International Art Center*, 310 Riverside Dr. Paintings of modern Norway, assembled by National Gallery of Art, Oslo.
- Keppel*, 16 E. 57th St. American sporting prints, to Jan. 15.
- Macbeth*, 11 E. 57th St. New paintings by Herbert Meyer, drawings by Eastman Johnson.
- Matisse, Pierre*, 51 E. 57th St. Paintings by European Artists, Jan. 7 to 31.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Fifth Ave. and 82nd St. French Painting and Sculpture of the XVIII Century, Gal. D6, to Jan. 5; French Prints and Ornament of the XVIII Century, Gal. K37-40; Goya Exhibition, opens Jan. 28; Egyptian Acquisitions, 1934-35.
- Morton*, 130 W. 57th St. Work by Oliver Chaffee, to Jan. 18; water colors by George Feldmann and K. Roller, Jan. 20 to Feb. 1.
- Museum of the City of N. Y.*, Fifth Ave at 103rd St. Parades and Processions in N. Y., Photographs of N. Y. Shop Windows, 1935, Late XIX Century Brocade Dresses, Hamlet in New York, to April.
- Museum of Modern Art*, 11 W. 53rd St. Paintings and drawings by Vincent van Gogh, to Jan. 5; oil paintings, water colors and drawings given by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Jan. 15 to Feb. 15.
- National Arts Club*, 119 E. 19th St. Members' Annual Exhibitions of Paintings and Sculpture, Jan. 9 to 31.
- National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors*, Amer. Fine Arts Bldg., 215 W. 57th St. 45th Annual Exhibition, Jan. 25 to Feb. 11.
- New Art Circle*, 509 Madison Ave. Water colors by Wassily Kandinsky.
- New York Historical Society*, Central Pk. W. at 77th St. The Great Fire of December 16-17, 1835.
- New York Public Library*, Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. Modern Color Prints, to Jan. 15; Max Liebermann Prints; Mark Twain Centenary Exhibition, Main Exhibition Room, to Apr. 15.
- Paris, Dorothy*, 56 W. 53rd St. Oils, water colors and etchings by A. Mark Datz, Jan. 6 to Jan. 25.
- Pen and Brush Club*, 16 E. 10th St. Water colors, pastels and black and whites by members, to Jan. 30.
- Rehn*, 683 Fifth Ave. Paintings by John Carroll, Jan. 2 to 25.
- Salmagundi Club*, 47 Fifth Ave. Annual Auction Exhibition, Jan. 17 to Jan. 31.
- Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences*, St. George. Greek and Roman art lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, through February.
- Sterner*, 9 E. 57th St. Sculpture by Warren Cheney, stained glass by Alice Laughlin, to Jan. 15; costumes and theatre scenes by Minelli, Jan. 15 to Feb. 1.
- Valentine Gallery*, 69 E. 57th St. Nine major paintings by XX century French masters, Jan. 6 to Feb. 1.
- Walker*, 108 E. 57th St. Paintings by Lily Cushing Emmett, Jan. 6 to Jan. 19; paintings by Joe Jones, Jan. 20 to Feb. 1.
- Whitney Museum of American Art*, 10 W. 8th St. Temporarily closed until Jan. 14. Second Biennial Exhibition, Part 1, Sculpture, Drawings and Prints, Jan. 14 to Feb. 14.
- Wildenstein*, 19 E. 64th St. Drawings by Van Day Truex, Jan. 3 to 18; portraits and landscapes by John Young Hunter, Jan. 20 to Feb. 29.
- Wolfe, Catherine Lorillard*, Art Club, 802 Broadway. Prints and illustrations by members, Jan. 4 to Jan. 30.

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VINCENT VAN GOGH